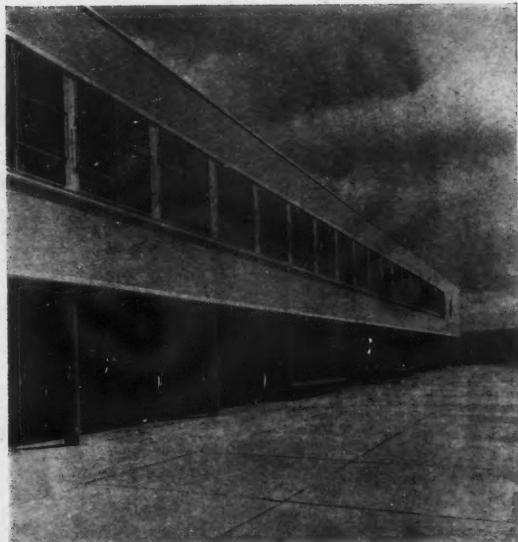


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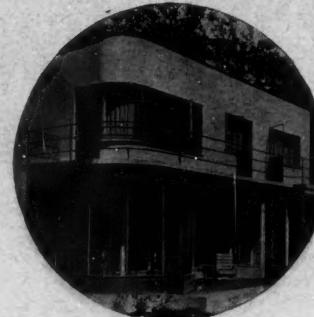
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Vol. LXXXIX

January 1941
February 1941

No. 530



A



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Before steam came to the aid of industry Derbyshire, not Lancashire, was the cotton county. Arkwright, who led the way in the transition from the hand-loom to machinery, built his first mill at Cromford, near Matlock, in 1771. Being dependent on water power the industry was a rural one, not an urban one, and the great cotton mills of this period were remotely placed in the deep-cut Derbyshire valleys where the water flows strongly down from the Pennine peaks. Many of them survive to this day, some in ruins—but ruins of a substantial kind, more like castles than factories, for they were solidly built of the local stone—and others still in use. This one is of the latter kind, though it now gets its power from

an engine-room that has been added at the back. It stands at the bottom of Millersdale, a valley whose rocky walls, thickly clothed with vegetation, tower above the roofs of the mill. Architecturally it has all the distinction of the late eighteenth century vernacular, being in that idiom which spread anonymously through England during a century and a half since the time when Wren created an English style out of the imported Renaissance. It also has all the impressiveness of scale and geometrical simplicity which is such a noble characteristic of early industrial architecture, but which disappeared when architecture lost its simple philosophy and consistent purpose in the turmoil of the Victorian age.

The Quarryman's Craft

By R. P. Ross Williamson

RED and ashamed, fourteen-year-old Eric Benfield hung his head in his father's quarry in the Isle of Purbeck as he listened to the nagging of the old men who hated him because he hadn't started work, as they had started—and their fathers before them—at the age of nine.

What hope could there be for a boy who hadn't known the exhaustion which would leave him, after a fourteen-hour day underground, so weak that he would have to be carried home? That was the only way to teach a boy to be a quarryman, they said. As it was, they doubted if he would be able to pick up even the rudiments of stone work.

Now that is talk we understand. Those of us who are fortunate enough to have had experience, however slight, of a Puritan up-bringing have heard something of the same sort in our youth. There is something familiar about that threat of oppression, an insistence on the necessity of physical suffering in early life, however useless in direction and vindictive in application, from which the victim would emerge, shaken certainly, maimed possibly, but well on the road to being a "good man." And that was the most important thing of all. If you were a good man it was comparatively simple to be a good painter, a good poet or whatever it was you wanted to be when you grew up.

The belief that the soul might be winnowed by infliction of the body has at all times been an exceedingly popular one. Just now it is going through one of its rare periods of not being in fashion, but because of that we must not forget the part it has played in the religions of mankind from the beginning.

The interesting thing is that among the old crafts, and especially those concerned with stone, wood and metal, this faith has never waned. By their initiation rites, their long years of indenture, their insistence on getting hold of their "victims" at the earliest possible age—before reason or strength can challenge the supremacy of fear and physical force—the old men assert their old prerogatives of inflicting pain and punishment on the acolyte. Nobody, it seems, ever seriously thought of questioning the ethical rightness of the master and apprentice system, so that, unchallenged, traditional rite and custom became increasingly rigid as the centuries went by; and when at length opposition was met for the first time in the shape of a machine, veneration for the old way of doing things was only increased. But this new hallowing of ancient custom brought with it an insidious danger: sentimentality. In the end the new friend was to prove the traitor. Does anyone today *really* believe that a hand-made article is better than a machine-made one just because it has been made by hand—that is if he stops and thinks about it? After nearly a century of sentimental thinking about "craftsmanship" it still does take a moment's thought to decide—even on the part of quite honest people. If you condone one principle of the hand-made fallacy then it is probable that you will approve them all and not

trouble to enquire if all the old stern business of apprenticeship, with its years of drudgery and "tea-boy" servilities which are just as bad as anything prevailing in a factory concerned with "mass production" (as we disparagingly call it), is implying there is something dreadful about it, is really necessary? Because these years of weariness and boredom—a boredom inconceivable to the adult once he is through it—are all part of the system which has produced the much-prized article and are essential to it.

Are we going to fool ourselves that technical perfection where hand-made stuff is concerned is a matter of a semi-mystical inward grace in the craftsman, or are we going to be sensible and admit that when it's good it is only good because its maker has made himself into a machine to produce it? He has devoted years to doing the same thing so often that in the end you will hear him *boast* that his effort is just "mechanical." Why, then, should we be so fierce about the poor machine that saves him all the trouble of making himself into a machine—and those years of unhappy childhood?

In recent years there have been plenty of signs that a revolt against the sentimental fallacy has not only begun but is in full swing. But the many craftsmen who have become articulate and written about the things they know are not in this revolt as one might have expected. The wisdom and sensibility which grace so much of their writings suggest that they might have been the first to dispel thinking which makes sense no longer. "Old men" themselves now, presumably, they approve the traditions of the "old men" before them—the whole impressive fabric of rite, fetish and taboo. In Mr. George Sturt's *The Wheelwright's Shop*, which one always thinks of when these craftsmen talk because he is so easily the best of them, we find that note of regret that he was too old when he began work in his father's shop ever to be any good at the trade. This plaintive cry goes right through the book and impresses the reader by its genuineness and depresses him by its conclusion. Sturt really did believe he was too old when he began work in the family wheel-wright business to be any good.

He listened to what the old men had to say to him—or, what is much more likely, *across* him, because this oblique method of vindication is the more usual with the old because of its effectiveness. That way you aren't even given the chance of answering back. You stand, red and ashamed, as Eric Benfield did, while they come and sit with one's father and go on "about the hopelessness of us youngsters as if I did not exist." But Benfield, unlike Sturt, was not going to be done down by them. Modestly, but convincingly, he shows us* that his entry into one of the most esoteric of the crafts was not made too late; that this talk of young or never was all part of the old men's bogey.

Five years or so, one would have thought, can't have mattered as much as all that at his tender age, but apparently his masters thought it mattered a lot and did their best to take it out of him by disheartenment.

Although father "would have cut off his hand before he said I was doing well," he took heart and gave up thinking about joining the army or navy and, "presently I found that some of those men who had been so cheerfully hopeless about us could do no more in a day than I could."

This defiance—for such it was—is perhaps the most important thing about his book. For too long it had been supposed that one couldn't do this and one couldn't do that because one hadn't been brought up to do it. It is true that the Arts and Crafts movement considerably shook confidence in this belief last century. Quaint and dreadful as the finished products often were, their creators were frequently surprised to find how easily the technicalities of beating, chipping and welding could be mastered if you had your heart in the job. And then in our own time, urged less, perhaps, by creative impulse than economic necessity, we have seen surprising successes made by unlikely people in unlikely jobs. Not that it has mattered very much if these people did succeed. It mattered very much in Victorian times, but in our own a succession of failures is the same thing as having had "an interesting life" and is the first qualification for writing a best-selling autobiography.

If it is still quite a good thing to be an amateur one realizes, in reading Mr. Benfield's book, how much more satisfactory it is to be an expert. But then, born, as he was, into a family which had been engaged in quarrying and stone-cutting for generations, he had little choice of being an amateur. In the first place the quarry, unlike the carpenter's bench, blacksmith's anvil or potter's wheel, is not the sort of place where an amateur would be made welcome, however keen he was. In the second place, Mr. Benfield's family was part of what must surely be the most select and most "closed" trade guild in England: "The Company of Marblers and Stone-Cutters of the Isle of Purbeck," and that is not the sort of corporation to be treated lightly.

To most of us the Isle of Purbeck means one thing or another. For many, Swanage is its chief ornament. Corfe Castle, on the road there, must seem to them the ideal castle, so perfect is it as a ruin and in the way it stands on guard over the pass through the hills. It is the island which is not an island, the unspoilt province of select beaches where one pays a bob a time to get a glimpse of the sea: the comfortable "runout" for Sunday afternoon Bournemouth. But to the cathedral visitor, avid for beauty, it means the dark brown marble "clustered columns" of Ely, Salisbury, Exeter. To the schoolboy, confident with heel-ball and ceiling-paper, the brass-bearing slab

* In his book, just published: "Purbeck Shop: a stoneworker's story of stone." (Cambridge: The University Press. Price 12s. 6d.)

THE QUARRYMAN'S CRAFT

which sweats so queerly in humid weather. It is not so usual to think of it as an area so intensively honeycombed with the shafts and galleries of quarries that a great deal of its surface is unsafe to build on lest it cave in: that this soft and uneventful countryside conceals a subterranean activity which has been going on since the shrine of Edward the Confessor was adorned with choice slabs of marble sent to Westminster from its quarries in the twelfth-century.

Stone averaging six inches in thickness forms the bulk of the Purbeck trade. This may not *sound* impressive but when one realizes that three or four inches is considered sufficient for the facing of London's most impressive "stone" buildings and that the mighty Corfe Castle itself, most illustrious example of its use, has very little thick stone in all its bulk, one sees that this is not at all inconsiderable. It will do exceedingly well for curb stones, window sills, sinks, gate-posts, troughs, paving stones and steps (millions of steps must have gone from Purbeck at one time or another—enough, Mr. Benfield says, to make even Jacob's Ladder look small). There are no open quarries here—the great exposed cliffs of Durlestone Head are not worked today—the stone being won in shallow mines from 40 to 70 feet below ground and drawn by capstan power to the surface up sloping shafts. The means of extraction are entirely simple: by wedge and a crossbar called a "paddle." The quarryman's "overheads" are mercifully small—a fact which one hopes makes a slump easier economically to bear: the keep of the horse which works the capstan, his candles and the bill with the blacksmith for sharpening his tools—that is all.

The workings lie in a narrow strip, some ten miles long by at most two wide, on the southern fringe of the island, and they are often owned by the workers themselves who jealously maintain the privilege of keeping the trade in their families and look, as their neighbours on Portland do, without favour on foreigners. It is a condition which fosters rabid conservation of outlook, much inter-marrying in order to gain or keep quarrying rights and one which produces, happily, a very large number of "characters." How sad it is to think that little more than thirty years ago there were still men sensible enough of their own dignity to go to work in tail-coat and top hat, carrying an umbrella if it was wet. Mr. Benfield is inclined to be sentimental about them: "Those men were the last of their type; they were the last to insist on being washed by their womenfolk." Otherwise he is not too sentimental; not nearly as much as most "craftsmen" are. Yet it is sad, when one thinks of all the fine things that have come out of Purbeck in former times, from tombs of saints to the great walls of the early nineteenth-century harbours, to learn that today its most important product should be the bird

bath for the suburban garden. Even that doesn't make him shake his head as much, perhaps, as some of his readers would like him to. He discusses the economics of this latter day trade, praises the skill which is necessary still to produce a bird bath, examines the dictates of a new aesthetic.

And why should he be over-despondent about the decayed state of the trade at the moment? There is magnificent material there: twenty-three separate beds of stone, all different more or less in character, are listed in the authoritative books, and that does not include the various names which local quarrymen give to them or parts of them. There is a vast store of inherited knowledge about the working of these beds, and a new spirit of craftsmanship in modern architecture may well coincide with a wider use of stone.

But the marble is all gone, the last of it worked out in the great church building epoch of the last century, presumably, and the only piece that Benfield worked on was the small one that he was given to make the clock case which every boy attempts in his early days of the trade:

"There surely are nearly as many unfinished clock cases as there have been boys put to the trade, and that is a lot. Gathered together, those unfinished clock cases would build many institutions for aged stone workers . . . Great, heavy, finger-marked things they usually are, and very often the clock to fit them was too expensive to buy, as few boys had the forethought to make their case to fit the clock."

With retrospection behind and salvation ahead, Mr. Benfield's descriptions can be read for their own sake. The way the trade or "cant" terms are used should alone make this worth while; there is none of that abominable self-consciousness in their application which makes too many of these "craftsmanship" books intolerable.

One is impressed, of course, but should resist the temptation, as the author has done, to become sentimental over sensitivity of this sort:

"When a quarryman first sees a stone he does not know what size it will turn out, because only one side of it can be seen—like looking at the face of one brick built in a wall—but by striking it, one who knows can form a very good idea of its size . . . I have known a man, when showing me his workings, say: 'Now here's a good thornback. Hear it now? Six feet in to the point this end. And four foot six this end. Hear that? No, four foot seven. Hear that?'"

And of splitting a block when the wedges tighten:

" . . . when they are ready there is almost a sense of strain about the blocks to the experienced man. To an outsider looking on it is only six steel wedges standing in six holes across a stone, but the man using the hammer has felt vibration which seems to come out of the stone up through the wedges and into his arms by way of the hammer and handle. Some men who have cut thousands of stones will say they never felt it, but even

they know just when to apply the last blows, the blows which really break the stone."

The descriptions of conditions underground should give courage to the most chronic claustrophobist:

"Men will take risks underground that they would not think of for a moment in the cold light of day. Some say it is because there is neither sight nor sound from any outside source to take his attention from the work . . . but it is my belief that it is the constant atmosphere underground which puts a man in the mood to take risks. In the most sheltered spot on the earth's surface there is always some little play of heat and cold to the skin; the sun's going behind a cloud will impress itself upon the most absorbed person, at least the re-appearing sun will cause him to adjust his eyes to its light, and there is always something to warn him that there are other powers to be guarded against. When once a man has warmed up underground there is nothing to check him, he sweats but does not stop—there is nothing to be considered except himself pitted against the stone. He does things which ten thousand pounds would not tempt him to do above ground. And where, even though it means leaving the sunshine behind, and the ships in the bay, can you find *spiritual comfort* equal to what you will find underground? where find elsewhere the solitude, the immunity from wrath of season or despair as the sun westerly, the quietness, the flame of a single candle which if you dropped it or blew it out left you with 'the darkness of doom itself everywhere; thunder, lightning, rain or falling stars might all appear on earth, Prime Ministers or the price of beer might fall, but nothing of them all could reach down to where I was.' It was at such times that I came to favour the idea of absolute annihilation. There seemed little attraction in the promise to be raised into blazing heavenly light; and to float about space for ever and ever in a nebulous state seems a restless reward after the toil of life on this earth. Far more comforting is the thought of a real absolute end in complete blackness, and I know there is comforting friendliness in the bowels of the earth . . ."



Handling street curb stones in the Isle of Purbeck. From "Purbeck Shop" by Eric Benfield (Cambridge University Press).

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SCHOOL AT ECCLESFIELD, YORKS.

**SIR JOHN BURNET, TAIT
AND LORNE, ARCHITECTS**

CHIEF ASSISTANT, FREDERICK MACMANUS

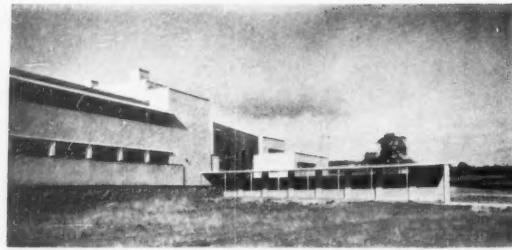
The two wings at right-angles to one another, which contain all the classrooms, laboratories, etc., face south-east and south-west and enclose a large playground subdivided down the middle for boys and girls. 1, from the south, looking across the playground and showing on the right the gymnasium which forms a separate block at the end of the laboratory wing. This wing has its lower storey recessed behind columns to provide a sheltered extension of the playground. 2, looking along this play space towards the classroom wing in the distance. The external facing of the building is a waterproof cement rendering finished with Derbyshire spar dashing.



3, the main entrance front, with the assembly hall with its tall windows on the right of the entrance doors. 4, looking obliquely along the same front, with the entrance hidden by a projecting row of cycle sheds and the assembly hall in the distance. 5, the other side of the assembly hall and the corridor side of the classroom wing. 6, the classroom wing from the playground, looking along the laboratory wing. 7, the covered play-space beneath the laboratory wing, showing the pupils' entrances.



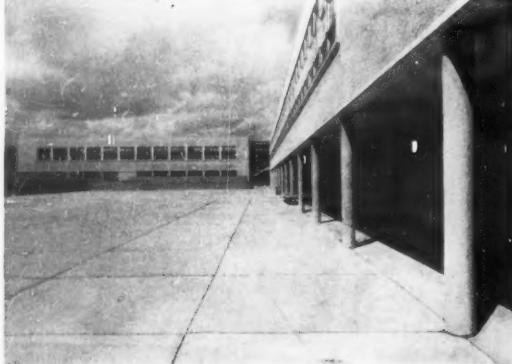
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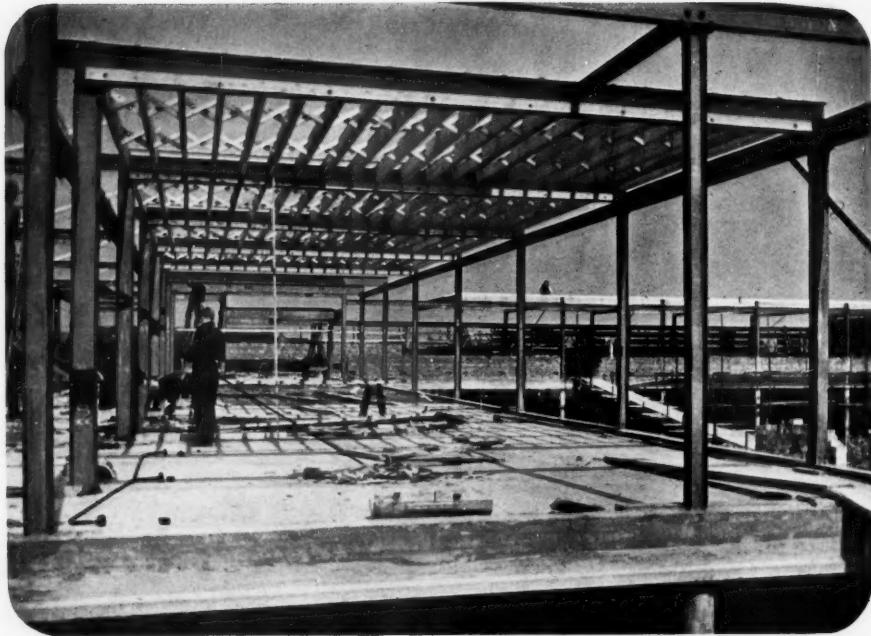
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6



7



8, a progress photograph of the classroom wing, illustrating the general method of construction. A light steel frame leaves the floor free of obstructions so that internal replanning can easily take place. When the photograph was taken the solid concrete floor had already been laid and the timber roof had been begun.

THIS is a mixed senior school designed for the West Riding County Education Committee. It accommodates 280 children. The site, of about $10\frac{1}{2}$ acres, is just off the High Street of Ecclesfield town. The school buildings and playground occupy about one acre of the site, leaving the remainder for playing fields.

The buildings have been placed on the north side so that the principal rooms can have a sunny aspect and at the same time overlook their own grounds. In the main they consist of two wings, one (facing south-east) containing the classrooms and one (facing south-west) containing laboratories and other rooms for special subjects. These wings are linked by the main staircase and entrance hall beyond which projects the assembly hall as an independent block. This allows the hall to be used as a social centre in the evenings without interfering with ordinary school purposes. The entrance hall is large enough to be used as an exhibition hall. A kitchen adjoins the assembly hall, and from it about fifty of the children, who come from a distance, can be served with dinners. The stage is used as a dining hall to avoid having to move the assembly hall seating each day. The gymnasium forms another independent block at the opposite end of the laboratory wing. Its changing rooms and shower baths have direct access from the playing fields.

In both the main wings the teaching accommodation is on the first floor. In the case of the classroom wing, which runs against the slope of the ground, there is space at the lower level up to only half its length, and this is occupied by staff rooms. In the case of the laboratory wing the ground floor is occupied by the pupils' entrances, cloak-rooms and lavatories, and the covered play-space, in the centre of which is a milk bar. In both wings the teaching rooms have large windows on the sunny side and small ones, to provide cross ventilation, on the other side, these being above the roofs of the corridors. There are four ordinary classrooms and five special subject rooms, including art room and library. The art room has a special north-light window.

The buildings are constructed with a light steel frame, with panel walls of brickwork. This system allows all partition walls to be independent of the main structure, so that future alterations can be easily made. The walls are treated externally with waterproof cement rendering finished with Derbyshire spar dashing. Base walls, retaining walls, flower-boxes,

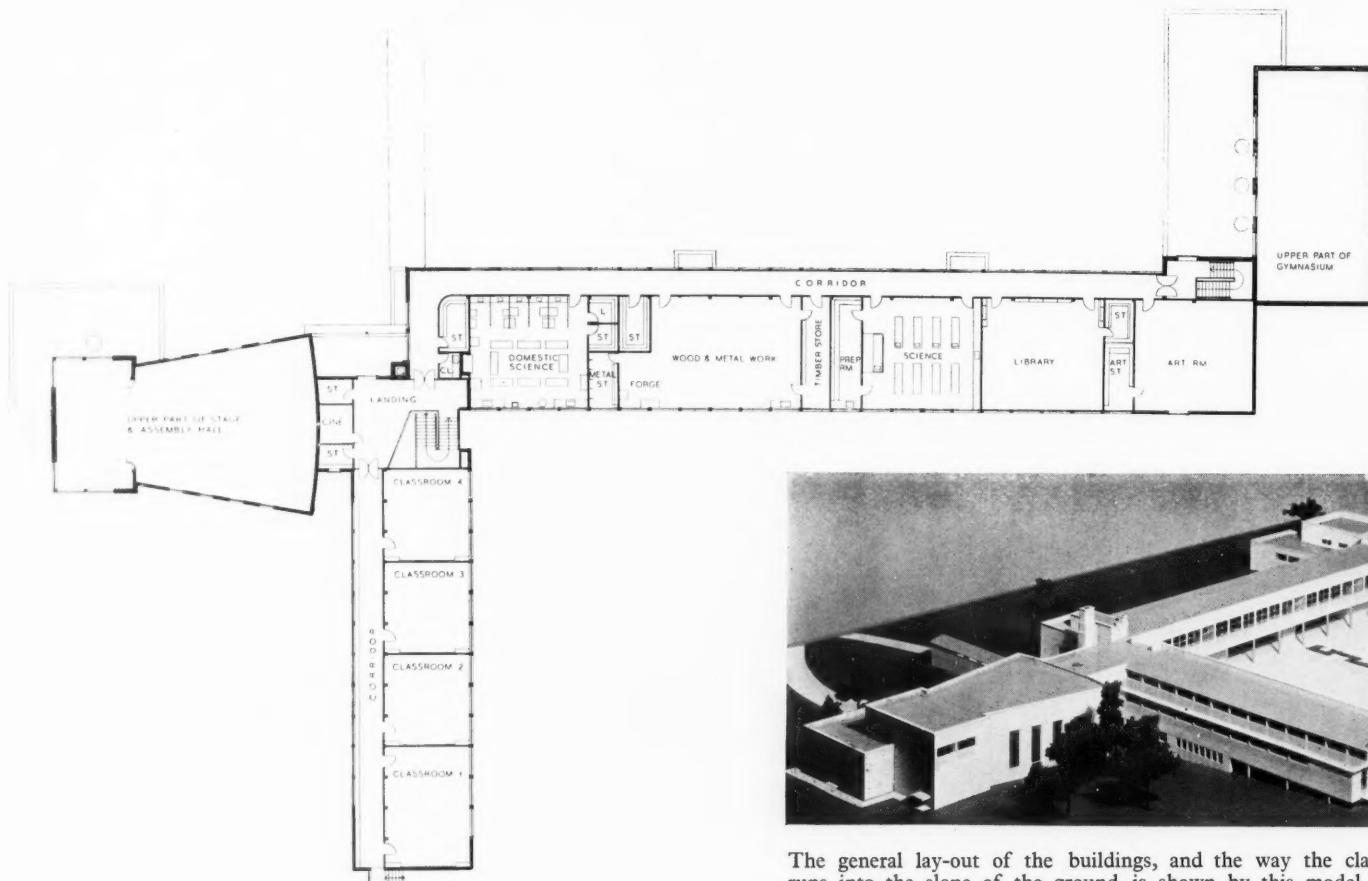


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etc., are of random rubble stonework. Internally the walls and ceilings of the first floor rooms are lined with special insulating material to reduce heat losses.

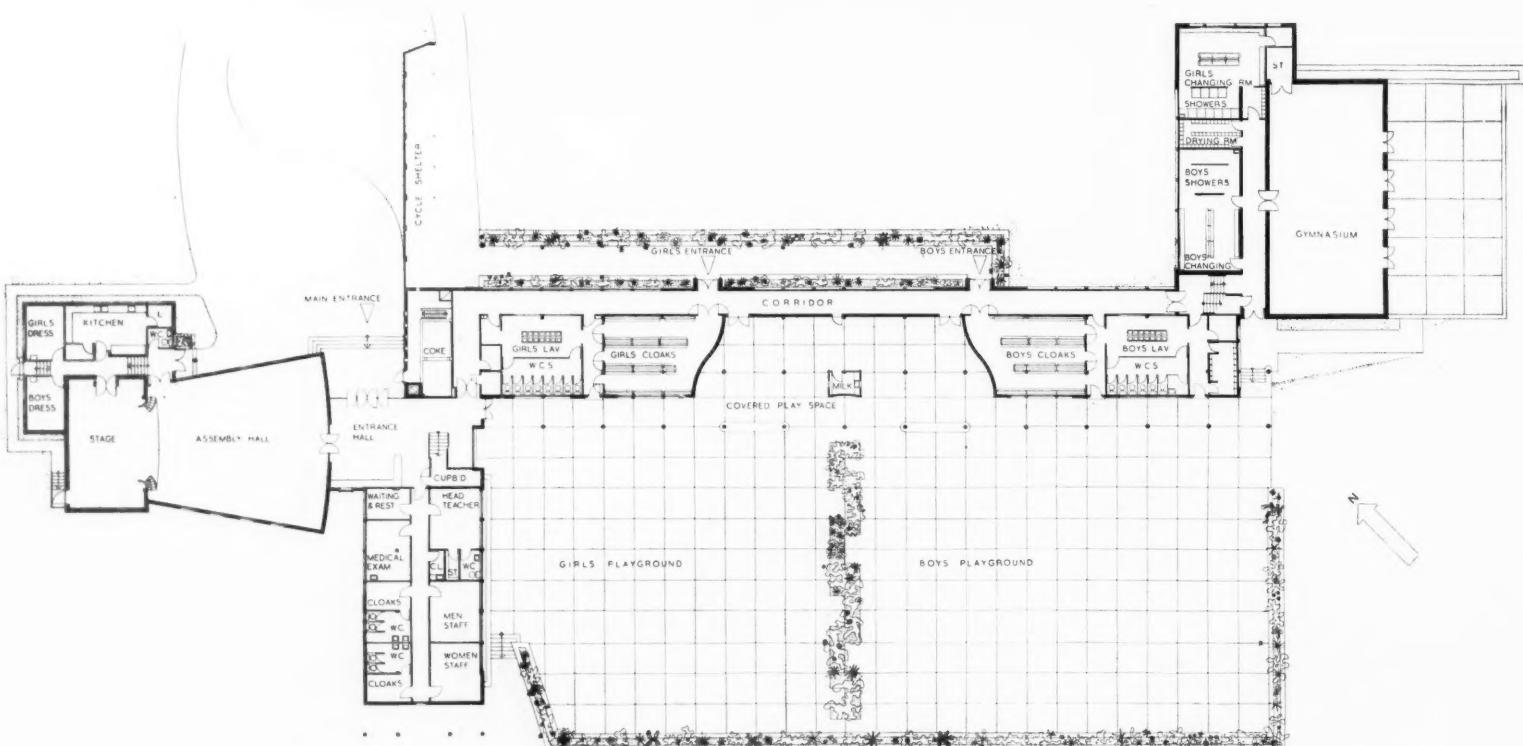
The buildings are centrally heated by a low-pressure accelerated hot water system. The gymnasium is heated from the ceiling in order to keep the wall and floor space free for the necessary apparatus. The hot-water supply to the gymnasium showers is thermostatically controlled for the safety of the children.

9, the corner of the playground, where the two main wings of the building are linked by the staircase hall. The large window in the centre of the picture lights both stairs and hall. On the left is one of the base walls constructed of local stone. The columns are cased in concrete and painted a light terra-cotta colour. The playground is paved with concrete slabs cast *in situ*.



F I R S T F L O O R P L A N

The general lay-out of the buildings, and the way the classroom block runs into the slope of the ground, is shown by this model, made before building began. The assembly hall, fan-shaped in plan, is on the left, and the approach from the town on the far side.



G R O U N D F L O O R P L A N



10, looking along the corridor side of the laboratory wing, showing the pupils' entrances. These lead directly into the corridor which runs the length of the wing on the ground floor, and off this corridor open in turn the cloakrooms and lavatories and the covered playground on the far side. The main entrance to the building is screened from view by the bicycle sheds seen in the background.

10



11, looking at the other side of the same wing. Behind the covered play-space are the lavatories and cloakrooms which are also reached direct from the corridor and entrances shown above. On the left is the classroom wing with its ground floor portion cut off by the slope of the site.

11



12

The main staircase hall occupies the angle of the building between the two wings, and the stairs directly link both ground-floor corridors with the first floor corridors serving the teaching rooms. The staircase hall also links the rest of the building with the assembly hall, to which it serves as a foyer. 12, the staircase from the assembly hall doorway, showing the large staircase window overlooking the playground and the glazed door leading directly into the covered play-space. 13, looking across the staircase hall from the staff-room corridor. On the left can be seen part of the main entrance screen and on the upper level the glazed doors leading to the laboratory wing corridor. The stairs are of

reinforced concrete construction with oiled teak treads and risers. The hand-rails are of teak on tubular metal posts, the latter painted turquoise blue colour. Walls and ceilings are painted white, wood doors are painted Indian red and metal doors and windows white. The staircase hall has a floor of buff quarry tiles laid with wide joints at 18 in. centres. 14, the main staircase landing. The white walls have a turquoise blue cement glazed dado. The room doors are Indian red and the glazed corridor door white. The landing and corridors have oak strip flooring. Through the door can be seen the lockers that line one wall of the classroom corridor.



13



14



15



16

15, a typical classroom. The main windows, facing south-east, are on the left. On the right can be seen the clerestory windows above the corridor roof, which give cross ventilation. There are four of these general classrooms, each equipped with the built-in cupboards, linked with a framed blackboard, shown in the photograph. The walls, ceiling and woodwork are all painted white, except for the blackboard wall which is pale blue. The door of the tall cupboard is Indian red and that of the small cupboard a warm yellow. The classroom door is pale blue and the cement glazed dadoes turquoise blue. The floor is of deal boards. 16, the domestic science room, at one end of the laboratory block. It has five separate kitchenettes, each with its own sink, cooker and cupboards. These can be seen, partitioned off to eye level, along the corridor wall. These partitions, of cement glaze on concrete, are mottled turquoise blue and white. The dadoes to the rest of the room are similarly coloured. The walls and ceilings are painted a pale buff colour. The room has a buff quarry tile floor with a dark blue linoleum centre. 17, the classroom corridor, lined along one side with the pupils' lockers. Walls, ceilings and lockers are painted white, with the locker doors warm yellow. The room doors and the tubular metal supports to the lockers are Indian red.



17



18

18, the assembly hall which, together with its ancillary accommodation, is planned as a self-contained unit so that it can be used in the evenings as a social centre, independently of ordinary school activities. The staircase and entrance hall serves as a foyer to it and also as a subsidiary exhibition room. The hall has two dressing rooms behind the stage; also a kitchen with its own service entrance, as the stage is used by some of the children for mid-day meals. The assembly hall is fan-shaped in plan for acoustic and seating efficiency, and the rear wall, also for acoustic reasons, is lined with sound-absorbing tiles in 1 ft. by 2 ft.

panels, left their natural buff colour. This wall is shown in the photograph, together with the glazed door through which the staircase hall can be seen. The walls and ceilings are white and the dado of the rear wall and the radiators pale blue. The flooring is oak blocks. Rust-coloured window curtains were not yet fixed when the hall was photographed. The stage curtains are turquoise blue and the front of the stage is painted rust colour. The stage is fully lighted and is wired for sound projection. A cinema projection room is provided, opening off the first floor staircase landing.



19



20

The pupils' lavatories are on the ground floor of the laboratory wing, between the main entrance corridor and the playground. 19, a central row of wash-basins on a tiled wall. The lavatory has a granolithic floor, ivory walls with a turquoise blue cement glaze dado, and fair-face concrete ceiling painted ivory. 20, a row of w.c.s constructed with metal-faced plywood partitions fixed to tubular metal posts. The walls and ceilings are ivory, dadoes turquoise blue, door frames white, doors terra-cotta and tubular posts a warm yellow.

This article deals with a very slight subject that might appear to be limited in its interest; but it is of general importance as an example of the way detailed study in a narrow field can be used to illustrate and clarify the broadest possible tendencies. The author surveys a number of doors built during three centuries in one small German town and shows how they reflect the perpetual conflict between the survival of established traditions on the one hand and the assimilation of new impulses on the other. His article represents the sort of study that might well be undertaken more frequently in this country, where any number of particular or local provinces of design survive and, if studied in detail and properly collated, would throw fresh light on the cultural developments of their time.

Tradition and Style

By F. D. Klingender

ARCHITECTURE, as it changes through the ages, presents a spectacle of conflicting tendencies resolved. Fashion and tradition constantly struggle for mastery. The outcome varies in each building. Fashion tends to predominate in the metropolitan centres, tradition in the more backward towns and rural areas less immediately affected by changes in the social structure. The struggle between neo-classicism and the under-current of gothic forms, which links the successive gothic revivals in our own architecture since Jones and Wren, illustrates the conflict between fashion and tradition on an epic scale.

Life is never static. However persistently a community may cling to its time-honoured habits and conventions, it cannot resist the influence of changing conditions emanating from more progressive centres. So it is with architecture. Local builders may cling to traditional practices and forms of design, but the changing rhythm of social life will unmistakably leave its mark on those forms and practices. It may express itself in subtle changes in the general proportions, rather than in the details of a building, or it may scatter new and incongruous details over a traditional structure. Whatever the nature of the compromise, the result will in some way breathe the atmosphere of its period.

It is this atmosphere which is the essence of style. And the problem of æsthetic sensibility in the historical sphere is the problem of sensing style; sensing the atmosphere of social life at a given period, in any work, whether it displays the fashions of the capital or some specific modification of traditional designs. A sense for style cannot, therefore, be acquired by studying text books. It can only be acquired by patient study in the field and by comparing the flow of architectural creation in the metropolis with the fascinating interplay of fashion and tradition in local centres where the rhythm of life follows a less tempestuous beat.

As a parallel activity to the study of the general principles of style development in the class room, a great deal can also be learnt by examining some local tradition in detail. Such an examination may confine itself to a narrow aspect of the subject and will require little more than a few weeks' leisure on the part of the student. The following pages represent an exercise in this kind of field-work: an inventory was made of some 500 house doors, ranging from the early sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, in the small German town of Goslar on the northern edge of the Harz Mountains, with a view to utilizing a detailed study of a restricted subject to illustrate much wider aspects of design, especially the process by which the influence of sophisticated styles penetrates into a vernacular tradition.

GOSLAR, which was founded as a royal hunting seat in the tenth century, was at its prime in the high middle ages, when it was both a residence of the emperors and an important mining town. The palace, dating from the eleventh century, the cathedral, now unfortunately destroyed, and the romanesque city churches are imposing monuments of its early greatness. In spite of temporary periods of decline, due to the flooding of its silver mine, Goslar remained a flourishing centre of industry and trade until the early sixteenth century. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries its internal history was convulsed by bitter social struggles in which the poorer classes, represented by the craftsmen and led by the merchants, organized themselves in guilds and fought for a share in the city government. Their opponents were the descendants of the former palace officials and imperial knights who had been rewarded for their services by grants of mining shares and forest rights. The victory of the democratic coalition in A.D. 1290 changed the composition of the ruling faction, but did not remove the source of social strife, and this flared up again with particular intensity in the Reformation period. In 1517 the Duke of Brunswick, an old enemy of the town, occupied its mine and forests

and thus deprived the Goslar workmen of their livelihood. Consequently the mass of the people tended to support the more radical reformers, while the city could only hope to obtain redress for the wrongs it had suffered at the hands of the Duke by appealing to the Emperor, whose main concern was the suppression of heresy. In this difficult situation the Goslar authorities sought to steer a middle course. They suppressed the left-wing radicals, but embraced the more moderate Lutheran form of protestantism and thus forfeited the support of the Emperor. A crushing treaty signed in 1552 deprived Goslar of its mine and forests and reduced it to a sleepy country town, its isolation accentuated by the status of a "free imperial city," which it retained until the early nineteenth century.

The period covered by the doors which are the subject of this study thus begins at a time when Goslar was still a proud and prosperous city republic, a time which has left its mark in the great patrician houses, built of stone or half-timber work, and in the monumental city gates and towers, whose walls were thick enough to resist the new fire-arms. Most of the doors, however, date from the long period of decline, when only a few large houses were built and the typical unit was the small craftsman's dwelling. As the wealth of Goslar



1, Early sixteenth century patrician gateway, of the period of Goslar's greatest prosperity. The diagonal boarding gives a simple wave pattern.

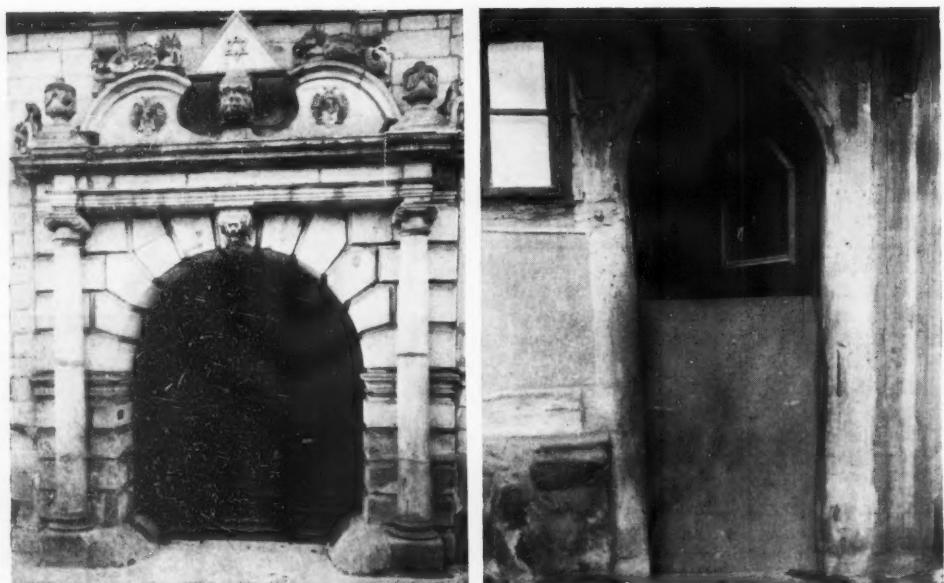


2, The same medieval type of door, showing variations of the diagonal motif, persisted right up to the nineteenth century, even though the wealth of the town and the influence of the craftsmen's guilds had dwindled: a late medieval door in an eighteenth century frame.

dwindled, the prevailing atmosphere became more and more petty bourgeois. Though defeated politically, petty democracy began to dominate the social and intellectual life of the town. But it was a conservative, no longer a radical and militant, democracy. Isolated from the fashionable currents which flourished in the surrounding principalities, the petty merchants, craftsmen and miners of

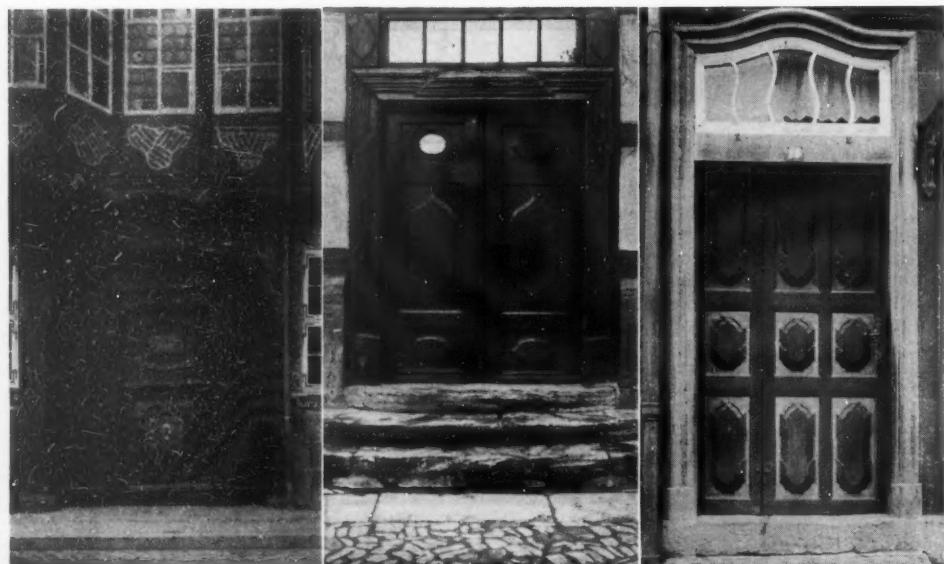


More variations on the mediæval theme, a late sixteenth century door from a rich house, 3, (dated 1577) and an early eighteenth century one, 4, (dated 1719) from a lower middle class house. The latter shows a fully developed renaissance surround in contrast to the mediæval style of the door itself.



5, a doorway from an old patrician house which was reconstructed in the early seventeenth century, showing the sophisticated style typical of the period immediately preceding the Thirty Years' War.

6 shows that the doors in working-class houses of about the same period were more primitive in style as well as in form: from a small house in the miners' quarter, dated 1582.



But conservatism was not entirely confined to the craftsman classes. 7, a large house of 1693, has its door also divided horizontally in the traditional peasant fashion, concessions to style appearing only in the ornament. However the more typical door of the early eighteenth century has more affinities with the internal joinery that was permeating the houses of this time and reflects middle-class standards of comfort combined with puritanical restraint, 8 and 9.

Goslar led a narrow local life, their spiritual sustenance drawn from Luther's Bible and from the memory of a great past petrified in their civic institutions.

The domestic architecture of Goslar since the sixteenth century consists almost entirely of half-timber houses with steep slate-covered roofs. Their development shows a marked predominance of craft traditions, which differentiate them in a striking manner from the half-timber houses of neighbouring towns, especially the bishop's seat—Hildesheim—or the princely capital—Brunswick. There fashionable renaissance and baroque elements appear in great profusion, often obscuring the constrictional forms of the architecture. But even before the crisis of the mid-sixteenth century this rarely occurs in Goslar, and then only as a special display of humanist learning. Thus the "magister" Thalling displays his learning by a Greek inscription and a quotation from the *Corpus Juris* on the fine building known as the "Brusttuch" (1526), the structural features of which are overrun by a fantastic crew of monsters and puttos, devils and ancient gods, witches and bawdy wenches in company with the holy personages of the Adoration. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the local carpenters even returned to curiously primitive forms of decoration, fan- or wheel-shaped ornaments which they carved on the panels between the uprights, the horizontal beams facing the street being covered with quaint bible texts, as in 13. Nevertheless, fashionable elements slowly penetrated even into this conservative small-town art, and the style sequence, typical for Germany as a whole, can be observed both in the general character and in the details of the Goslar houses. This conflict of tradition and fashion is especially strikingly illustrated by the doors of the town.

The massive gateway, 1, worthily represents the magnificence of the great patrician houses built of stone during the hey-day of Goslar's civic power. A late gothic arch, richly profiled and large enough to admit a fully laden wagon, is closed by a heavy double-gate, a smaller opening within which serves for the every-day use of foot passengers. Similar arches on other buildings are dated from the first years of the sixteenth century. The gate itself has a surface of heavy, vigorously profiled boarding which is nailed cross-wise on to a vertical wood framing. The boarding forms a simple, angular wave pattern; in other examples it forms squares tipped on end, 3; while sometimes the whole surface is divided into diamond shapes, each with a square nailhead in the centre, 2.

This gothic type of door, so simply constructed yet so effective in appearance, continued to be made right into the nineteenth century. The style of the period is mainly expressed in the surrounding frame—sometimes the immensely solid door is much older than the frame and has been cut down to fit into it, as in 2; but the later doors are not, as a rule, as vigorously profiled as the mediæval ones. 3 and 4 are specimens from the later sixteenth and the early eighteenth century. In the former case the gothic stone arch is still preserved, the influence of the German "renaissance," similar to our own Jacobean, being confined to the straight architrave and the bronze panels above the arch. One of the panels bears the date 1577. While this is the door of a wealthy house, 3 belongs to the dwelling of a small craftsman, who had his name, together with that of his wife and the date 1719, carved on the panel above the typical baroque frame, the whole being protected against the rain by a heavily profiled cornice.

How conservative was the persistence of this type of door even in the seventeenth century is shown by a sumptuous "modern" gateway, 5. It adorns an old patrician house which was partly reconstructed in the early seventeenth century. Both the ornamental arch and the door itself typify that curious offspring of German mannerism in which the earlier ribbon ornaments became doughy and were compressed into strange "auricular" shapes. This style was much in favour in the area north of the Harz Mountains during the first half of the seventeenth century, one of its most impressive monuments being the church of St. Mary built by the Duke of Brunswick's architect, Franke, in

Wolfenbüttel (1608). In Goslar, too, it appears in many ornamental details on half-timber houses or church furniture, notably on the altar of the Marktkirche, which is dated as late as 1659; but this door is its most prominent secular example. (The triangular stone with the star is a modern addition, the building being the Freemasons' Lodge; it probably replaced an obelisk.)

We come next to a type of door which is even more primitive than the one with which we started. It consists simply of upright boards held together by rails at the back and, in the mediæval examples, by more or less elaborate ironwork in front. This type continued to be made for lower middle and working class houses and for stables until recent times (even today most of the Goslar workers keep a cow or goat in the backyard; they are driven into the forests by the communal herdsman every morning and return at night). Many of these doors are divided horizontally at about elbow-height, the upper flap serving as a window when the lower one is closed. 6 is a good example from a small house in the miners' quarter. Its gothic arch bears the date 1582 and the characteristic legend :

HILF GOTT AUS NOTD

ABGUNST IST GROS

(Help, God, in need—envy is great).

A similar door in a round timber arch bears the date 1693.

That conservatism was not, however, confined to the lower classes is evident from a gateway, 7, also dated 1693. This is constructed on essentially the same principles, including even the divided inner door, as the specimens just discussed. Concessions to fashion appear only in the ornamental details: heavy baroque cartouches and mouldings with putto-heads, fruit motives and grotesque masks reminiscent of the auricular, which are laid on to the structural parts with little attempt at organic connection. Yet the fine half-timber house it adorns is one of the largest of its date and was built by a member of the local ruling class. Its original owner was Hans Siemens, ancestor of the family whose name and fortune are associated with the great electrical combine of today. "Ora et labora" is written on the upper panel of this door.

From the early eighteenth century onwards such archaic types cease to predominate. The more usual doors are joinery work consisting of a frame and panels (as is also, of course, the gate illustrated in 5). The more up-to-date doors, in other words, are the work of the cabinet maker, rather than the carpenter; indeed, both their construction and their decoration closely resemble those of the large cupboards of the time.

The outstanding "fashionable" door of the early eighteenth century in Goslar might well be taken for the front of one of the massive "Danzig" cupboards, whose wide double-doors, topped by a richly carved head, are decorated with a heavy, lozenge-shaped moulding, while the base is taken up by two low drawers with similar decorations. Unfortunately the door in question has been moved from its original position and is difficult to photograph. A more modest specimen without ornamental carving and with two small panels above, as well as below, the main ones, is shown in 8. Although it has been slightly shortened at the base and a new fan-light has been added, its general appearance, with the picturesque steps and the elaborately profiled baroque frame, gives a good impression of its original state.

The sole purpose of the massive, sharply profiled panel ornament which is the only decorative feature of this type of door and which can be studied even better in 9, is to convey a sense of solidity. It expresses the expansive comfort of the early eighteenth century middle class house with its heavy, puritanical atmosphere. With the spread of enlightenment and of the cult of sentiment this heavy atmosphere gradually gave way to a more elegant and graceful spirit. The more progressive craftsmen therefore abandoned the heavy baroque panel ornament, which had lost its meaning. But it was retained by the more conservative among the Goslar joiners throughout the eighteenth century. It is instructive to observe how the changing spirit



The later baroque middle-class door lost its original massiveness and developed refinements in keeping with the growing cult of sentiment. The floral carving in 10, which is dated 1729, is typical of this spirit. A further step is seen in 11 (mid-eighteenth century) in which softness is given by profiling the edges of the framework as well as the panels. In 12 (late eighteenth century) all the profiling has been transferred from the panels to the frame and the earlier lozenge motif has vanished.

of the time nevertheless asserted itself, despite the craftsmen's conservatism.

A pleasant door dated 1729, 10, shows a first attempt to soften the hard contrast of heavy surfaces by a more varied play of light and shade (unfortunately the upper panels have been replaced by modern glass panes). The lozenge ornaments have been made to appear less massive by softer profiling and especially by the delicate floral motives carved into the corners of the panels. The outer door-frame, too, is less heavy, a pleasantly rounded outer edge replacing the massed ridges shown in 8. The rich over-door is decorated with the typical baroque leaf ornament. All the details of this door are still, in fact, those of the high baroque, but there has been a subtle change in the proportions and therefore in the spirit of the whole.

A further step is seen in 11. The panel ornaments are more varied in shape, though still derived from the baroque lozenge, as the centre panels show, and they are much less heavy. At the same time the joiner has achieved great liveliness by profiling not only the panels themselves, but also the surrounding edges of the framework. Thus each panel is set off against the neutral background like a framed picture. Unfortunately this door, which probably dates from the middle of the century, is no longer in its original setting.

12 shows the last example of this type, made by a craftsman who had retained a genuine, if conservative, sense of form. The panel ornament has been reduced to a shadow of its former self. Resembling a cut-out paper pattern, it scarcely rises above the background. All the profiling has now been transferred from the panels to the moulded bases and plinths, which have been fastened to the rails of the structural framework. This interesting door cannot be earlier than the second half of the eighteenth century, although the curious fan-light which combines a pseudo-gothic arcade with a neo-classic garland is probably a somewhat later addition.

The lozenge ornament was retained as a lifeless convention to the end of the century, if not later. It has the atrophied form shown in 12, but there was no second attempt to transpose its former function to mouldings or other decorative features. 13 illustrates this decay, but would scarcely merit reproduction were it not that this particular door is set in a fine late gothic frame, dated 1573, which is a good example of the more modest, middle-class companion of the proud patrician gate shown in 1.

The more "up-to-date" mid-eighteenth century doors differ from the tradition just discussed both in construction and decoration. They breathe the



13, a modest eighteenth century door, with the paneling reduced to its simplest essentials, but set in a late Gothic frame (dated 1573) which is the middle-class equivalent of the more feudal example shown in 1.



14, a more sophisticated door of the mid-eighteenth century, introducing the fashionable rococo style, a development in quite a different spirit from the tradition of the previous illustrations.

spirit of the rococo. As a rule each door-wing has a tall upper and a smaller lower panel. The latter is generally treated as a curved pilaster, being sometimes raised in front of the framework while in other cases the same effect is achieved by a moulded base and plinth applied to the rails. A similar moulding is placed above the top panel, both being curved in the shape of a lying S, and this curve is generally followed by the top edges of the panels as well. The panels, mouldings and door-stops are often decorated with ornamental carving, but the main accents in the play of light and shade have been transferred from the panels to the mouldings on the framework. (The fact that the conservative craftsman of 12 adopted the same principle, shows that that door is contemporary with the tradition we are now discussing.)

A dignified rococo door in a well-to-do house (it is actually a former convent used as a home for aged ladies of the upper classes) is shown in 14. Its restraint is so much the more pleasing, as it is placed in a rich baroque frame which is probably some twenty years earlier than the door itself with its fine brass fittings. The overdoor belonging to the frame is dated 1719.

Richer in its details, but less distinguished, is the middle-class door illustrated in 15. Its decoration displays the imaginative exuberance which made the rococo ornaments so dear to the German craftsmen. That exuberance is taken to excess in 16. Its maker was so fascinated by the fantastic features of the rococo, that he magnified all its details. Thus he destroyed the graceful lightness which is its essence. This result is of great interest, since it illustrates another aspect of the interplay of fashion and tradition. This craftsman was clearly ambitious to produce a "modern" work. But he could not escape from the stolid atmosphere of his lower-middle class, small-town environment. His aesthetic feeling was still that of the heavy provincial baroque. Thus he transposed the ornamental details he may have seen in an imported copy-book into the language of a traditional style which combines the exuberance of the rococo with Teutonic small-town stolidness. In his hands the graceful *rocaille* assumed the doughy texture and the strange shapes of the seventeenth century "auricular" mannerism. How closely the auricular and German provincial rococo are related is also shown by the fact that quite a number of auricular designs anticipate the rococo. Below, for example, is a panel from the altar, dated 1659, of the Goslar Marktkirche.



Towards the end of the eighteenth century the more progressive craftsmen adopted the constructional and decorative forms of the classic revival: the straight pilasters and cartouches, the acanthus leaves and floral stars shown, for example, on the middle class door, 17. But the rococo



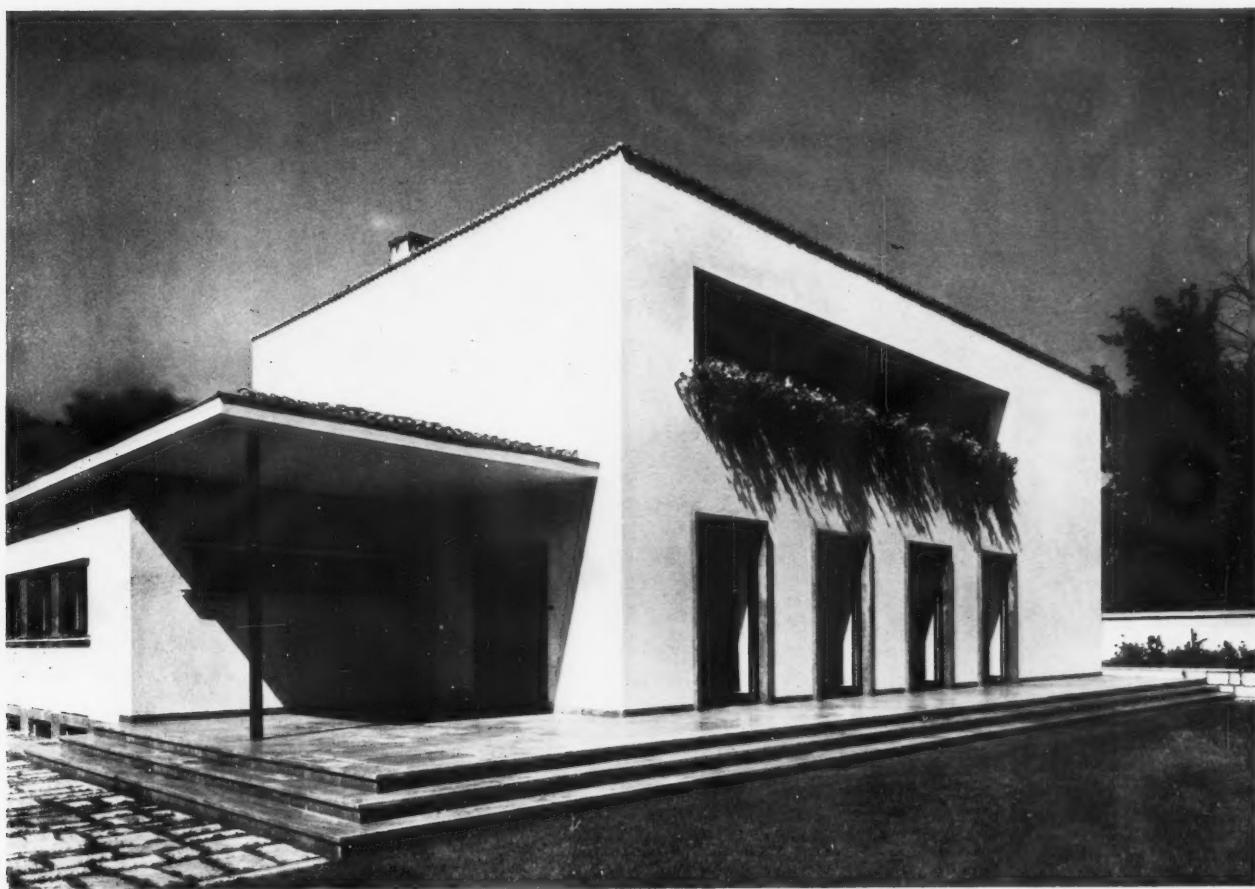
15
16
The exuberant rococo ornament in which German craftsmen delighted—shown in two middle-class doors of the mid-eighteenth century. 15 displays some architectural restraint but 16, in exploiting the rococo fantasy, has lost most of its grace. It reflects the stolid small-town environment aping but not understanding the aristocratic.



17
18-
19
However the classical revival of the end of the eighteenth century, 17, permeated all classes, though the rococo spirit did not vanish at once, especially among the artisan classes who had been slowest to adopt it. 18, for example, a working-class door of this period, has a severely neoclassical lower panel and a baroque contoured upper panel. 19, in a similar way, shows the structural skeleton of the baroque with decorations derived from neoclassic motifs.

tradition did not vanish without a struggle. It lingered in various forms in the furniture of the lower classes (incidentally, all these traditions were even more tenacious among the peasantry; continental peasant art has in many places preserved a form of baroque to the present day). 18 shows a charming little door which combines the neo-classical forms of its lower panel—a straight pilaster raised in front of the framework—and of its iron fittings, with a curved upper panel decorated with a delicate rococo edging and with a curved moulding on the top rail. Finally, 19 illustrates the dying gasp of the rococo. Only the structural scheme of the rococo door with its curved panels and mouldings remains, while the upper panels already display the pearl edging and rosettes of the classic revival.

The inventory of Goslar doors on which this article is based was made some years ago by the author for the purposes of private study, though it has never been published. At the same time some 60 photographs of doors and knockers, including those reproduced in the text, were taken. The auricular panel illustrated on the left was taken for the author by the photographer Albert Renger-Patzsch. The Goslar doors here illustrated were situated in the following houses when the inventory was made:—1, Bergstr. 6; 2, Kornstr. 10; 3, Schwickestr. 8; 4, Bergstr. 20; 5, Kornstr. 8; 6, Peterstr. 27; 7, Schreiberstr. 12; 8, Abzuchtstr. 6; 9, Breitestr. 32; 10, Breitestr. 45; 11, Hohe Weg 11; 12, Kornstr. 67; 13, Bergstr. 53; 14, Kloster Neuwerk; 15, Hohenstr. 18; 16, Kornstr. 53; 17, Schilderstr. 24; 18, Jakobistr. 7; 19, Breitestr. 35.

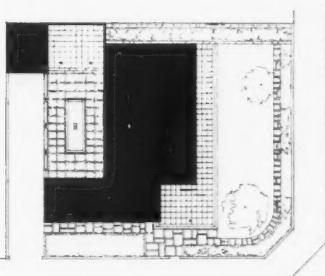


CURRENT ARCHITECTURE

H O U S E S

RUDOLF FRANKEL

SITE Bucharest, Roumania, at a corner of one of the main avenues of the city.



PLANNING The situation on a busy traffic thoroughfare demanded special planning to provide the quiet and privacy desirable in a private house. As the layout plan shows, a garden courtyard has been planned, protected from the road by the service wing of the house, and all the principal rooms look into this courtyard. All the windows of the service wing look in the other direction. There is a covered loggia at one end of the courtyard, linking the house with a garage.

1, the house from the garden, showing the tall windows opening from the hall on to a paved terrace. 2, from the road. The single-storey service wing encloses an inner courtyard. 3, the first-floor loggia overlooking the garden, seen from outside in 1. The floor is of black and white marble.



2



3



4

4, the garden courtyard with its pond in the middle and loggia at the far end. The living-room and dining-room windows open into this courtyard and can be lowered below ground so that the whole forms uninterrupted floor area. The trellis on the left screens the courtyard from the approach to the garage. 5, looking across the living-room into the dining-room with the row of courtyard windows on the right. The floor is of alternate oak and walnut strips. All lighting is indirect. Upholstery is beige and curtains terra-cotta. 6, the dining-room. The furniture is of dark walnut with grey leather upholstery. 7, the study, with palisander wood furniture, natural leather upholstery and brown velvet curtains. 8, the breakfast room on the first floor with its wide window overlooking the garden. The floor is marble and the window surround onyx.

H O U S E S

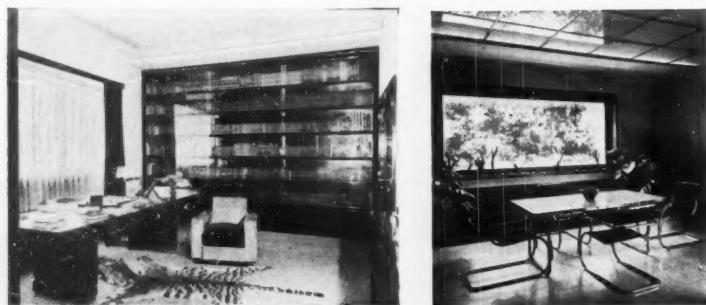
RUDOLF FRANKEL

CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPMENT The house is built of brick covered with light cream-coloured stucco. The plinth, the terrace paving and the window surrounds are all of travertine. Windows are metal, and the large plate-glass windows between the living-rooms and the garden courtyard can be lowered into the ground by electrical mechanism, throwing the whole of the rooms open to the air, a welcome possibility in the long Roumanian summer. Heating is by radiators served by a central boiler with full automatic oil burners. The radiators are placed under the floors and covered with bronze grilles.



5

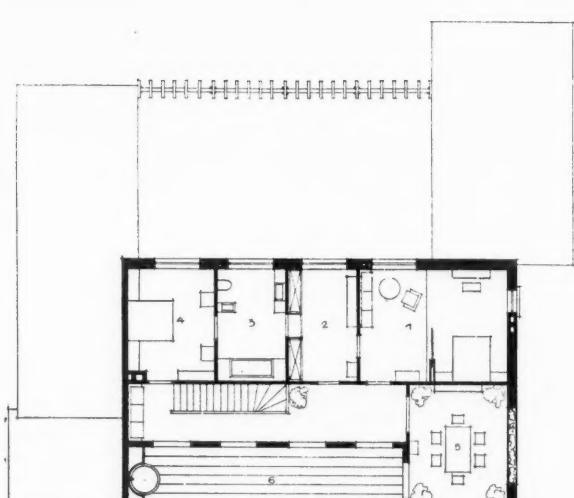
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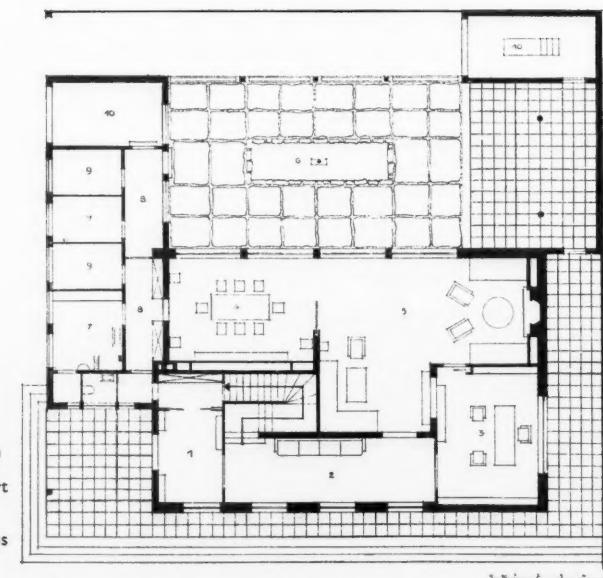
7

8

KEY
1 Bedroom
2 Dressing-room
3 Bathroom
4 Nursery
5 Breakfast Room
6 Terrace



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



POLICE BUILDINGS

COOKE AND TWIST

SITE Watford, Hertfordshire. The buildings were the subject of a limited competition held in 1936. They consist of two sections : a law-courts building, with administrative offices ; and police offices, with a number of houses and garages.

PLANNING The law-courts building contains two large police-courts, reached through a common ante-room. Adjoining them at the rear are the magistrates' retiring rooms, with a private entrance from the street. On the ground floor are the administrative offices, and on the first floor the magistrates' clerk's suite. A juvenile court adjoins the main law-courts but is self-contained. In the police offices a central entrance and vestibule leads direct to the charge room. The parade room is immediately adjacent, with a secondary exit from the parade and drill yard. Direct access is obtained from the charge room to the cells, and from the cells to the dock. The administration offices are mainly on the ground floor, with the police recreation rooms and the wireless room on the first floor. The main

corridor of the police offices communicates directly with the courts ante-room.

CONSTRUCTION The buildings have brick walls with solid concrete flat roofs and floors. Steel has been used only where necessary to allow large floor and roof spans. The facing bricks are silver-grey. Base and dressings are Portland stone.

FINISHES In the law-courts the walls have a hardwood dado 9 ft. high and acoustic plaster above. Seating is in oak, with upholstery of powder-blue hide. The floors are of oak blocks. In the ante-room the walls are faced with travertine, with skirting and columns in Swedish green marble, and the floors are of rubber. In the administrative sections and the police offices the walls are plastered, the flooring is of oak blocks and the doors are oak-faced. Lavatories have walls and floors tiled. Staircases are granolithic.

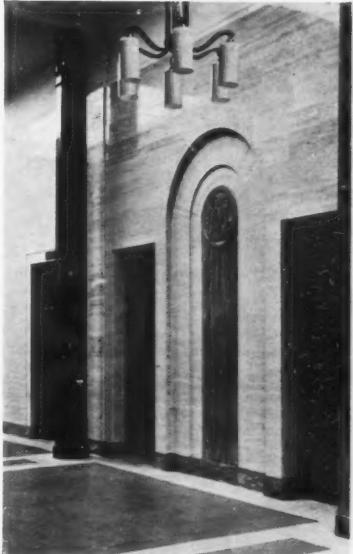
SERVICES Heating is by radiators fed from a low-pressure accelerated hot-water system.



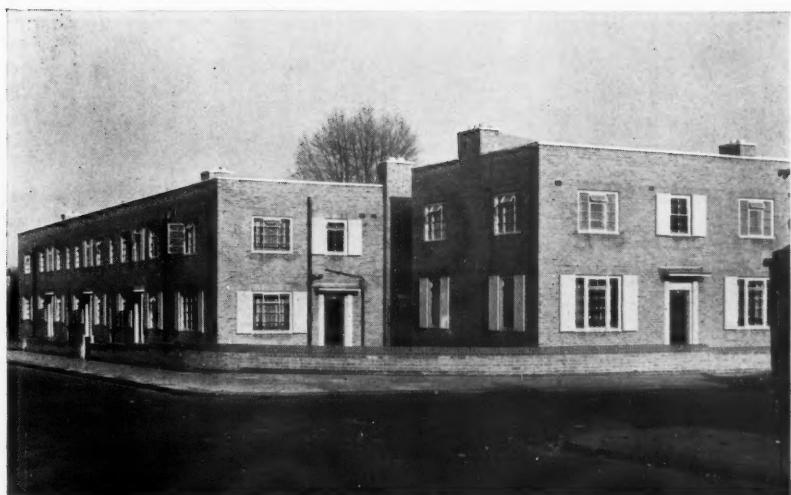
3



4



5



2

1, the main front of the law-courts building. It is finished in silver-grey facing bricks with Portland stone dressings. 2, looking along the terrace of police houses with the superintendent's house on the right. 3, magistrate's court no. 1. It is furnished in oak, with blue hide upholstery. 4, the courts' ante-room, with walls faced with travertine. 5, the doors leading from the ante-room into the rooms for male and female witnesses.



6, the police superintendent's house, placed at right-angles to the terrace of houses for police constables. Walls are faced with silver-grey bricks.

6

POLICE BUILDINGS COOKE AND TWIST

OFFICES

HOWARD AND SOUSTER



SITE On the Albert Embankment, London, facing the south end of Lambeth Bridge. The building is the latest of a row of recently constructed large business buildings along the river front. The main front has been recessed to provide a draw-in space, from which the car-park behind the main block is reached through a central archway.

PLANNING The building comprises ground and eight upper floors, together with a basement containing air-raid shelter accommodation. The office

1, looking along the main front, which faces the end of Lambeth Bridge. The lower storeys are faced with cast Portland stone and the upper ones with silver-grey bricks. 3, the entrance hall and main staircase.

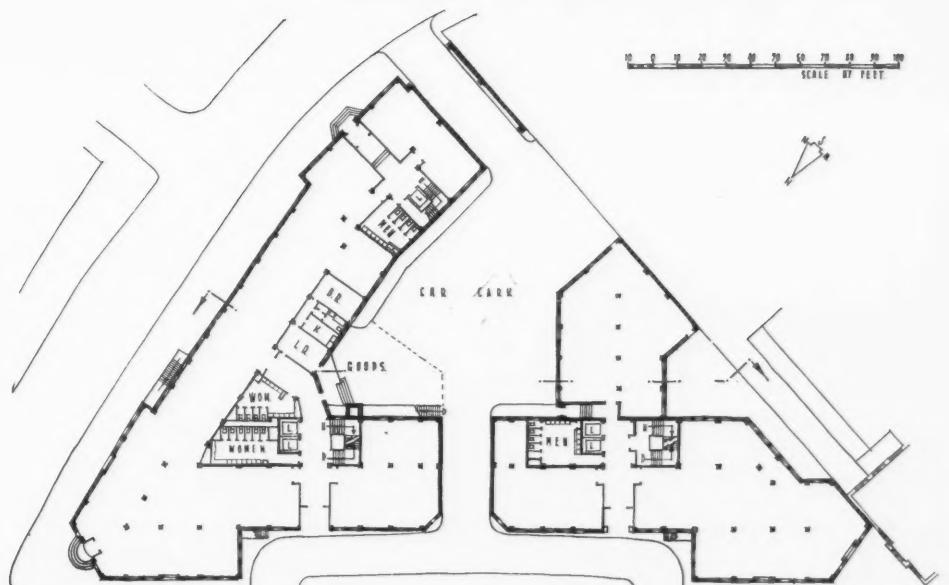


2

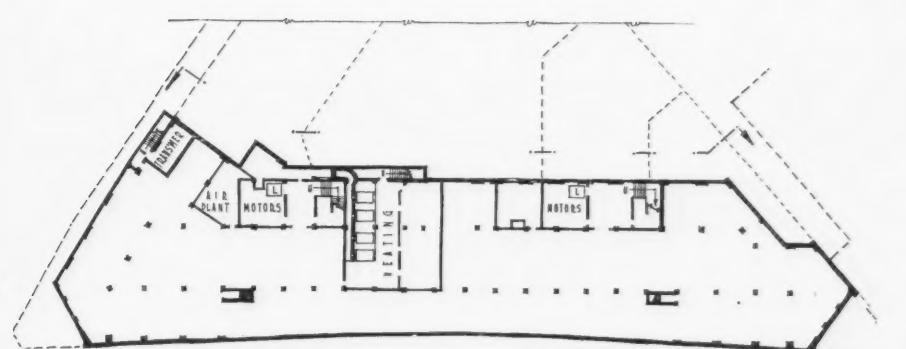
2, the main front of the building from across the embankment. The central portion is set back to provide a traffic drive-in. A car-park is reached through the archway.

floors are planned so as to be easily subdivided into large or small units, each with convenient access to centrally placed service blocks, consisting of lavatories, staircases and lifts.

CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS The basement is framed in reinforced concrete. The rest of the building is steel-framed. The main fronts are faced with cast Portland stone on the ground floor with silver-grey facing bricks above, the latter being pointed with silver-sand mortar. The top storey of all is again faced with stone. All the back elevations are faced with white bricks. Window cills are of stone. The main roofs are covered with three-ply bituminous waterproofed roofing and a 2-in. layer of insulated pumice concrete. All floors are finished with oak blocks.



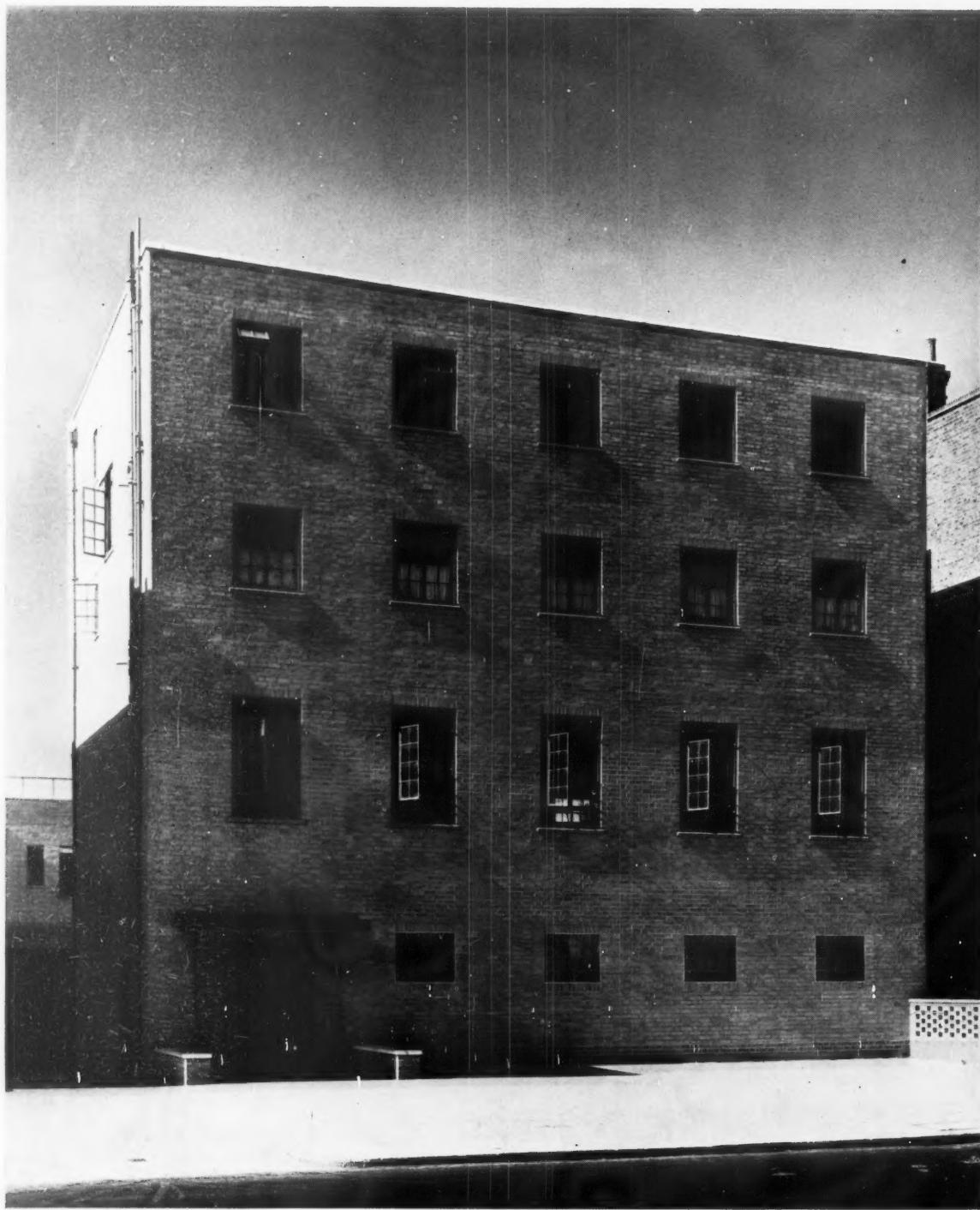
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT PLAN



3



PLANNING This is an addition to an existing building to provide recreational and educational facilities ; also living quarters and garage space.

CONSTRUCTION An existing retaining wall formed one boundary of the site, with a railway track about 5 ft. below. As this wall would not carry additional weight, the rear block of the building is supported independently on a reinforced concrete raft on concrete beams and piles. The superstructure is partly steel framed, with brick external walls. Roofs are concrete with filler joists. Floors are hollow tile. Partitions are either of brick or of patent blocks. Windows are standard metal casements.

FINISHES Floors in corridors and staircases have a granolithic finish. Those in other rooms are of wood blocks. Internal walls of lecture rooms are finished in fair-face brickwork. Other rooms are plastered.

SERVICES Central heating and hot water are supplied from a new plant that serves both old and new buildings. Married quarters have independent hot water services. Living-rooms and two bedrooms in each flat, and the sergeants' and men's recreation rooms, have open fireplaces.

1, the main elevation of the front block.
2, the rear block. It is a brick building with a partly steel-framed structure. The subdivision of the metal windows into small panes in an apparently "period" fashion has been done to minimize the effect of blast.



2

TERRITORIAL HEADQUARTERS

STANLEY HALL AND EASTON AND ROBERTSON

These monthly articles are frankly about aesthetic aspects of architectural design. They are written in the belief that we can now take the practical basis of modern architecture for granted. They claim, that is to say, that we have got beyond the stage when we were so thankful for sheer reasonableness and efficiency that these were sufficient recommendation in themselves, and that there is room now, in criticism as in actual design, for study of the graces that all good architecture displays, whether in the precedents set by the past or the growing maturity of the present.

I do not think it is sufficiently acknowledged how extensively taste is dependent on the simple factor of time. Each generation tends to imagine its own values to be the only possible ones. It sees itself as unique in possessing clear vision and a reasonable perspective; whereas in fact its vision is very largely the reflection of the characteristics of its period.

A more weighty factor in determining taste than some revelation of eternal truth is the fact that each succeeding generation feels as a matter of course least sympathetic towards its parents and grandparents and shows most tendency to discover forgotten virtues in the work of a generation before—work which has hitherto been despised. The "Queen Anne" revival of the Norman Shaw period was followed by the Georgian revival of the early nineteen-twenties. By the late 'twenties the charms of the Regency had been discovered, charms that to the earlier Georgian revivalists were as clearly symptoms of decadence—moral as well as aesthetic—as the Perpendicular period was to the "middle-pointed" or Camdenian enthusiasts of 1840. But it was still the fashion to laugh at all the Victorians until about a dozen years ago, when interest in the Regency terraces of Brighton naturally led to admiration of the early Victorian terraces of Cheltenham, and the romantic nostalgia typical of the nineteen-thirties—as it is of any period of similar instability—evoked a sympathetic echo from the romanticism of a century before; both from its wayward conceits and fancifulness and from the genuine anti-materialist romanticism of the age of Wordsworth and Sir Walter Scott.

Another turn of the wheel, and to-day we find ourselves able to appreciate mid-Victorian productions: seriously to admire, for example, a church by Benjamin Ferrey, a thing that would have been incredible twenty years ago when the Victorian age was still only of interest as evidence of the errors of our great-grandparents. I repeat, however, that we must take no credit for this as indicating special enlightenment on our part. Time has merely given the wheel of taste another turn.

It is apparent from even this superficial examination of the cycle of taste that the process is quite a regular one. It also seems, incidentally, to be subject to continuous acceleration. The "Queen Anne" revival took place about 180 years after its prototype, the Georgian revival 150 years, the Regency fashion 110 years, the early Victorian 100 years and the mid-Victorian period, on which our interest is at present concentrated, is only 80 or 90 years old. It will be noticed that I speak of the Georgian "revival" and the Regency and early-Victorian "fashions," and the reader will probably himself have objected that the process I have summarized is not a consistent one: in the case of the first periods mentioned the styles of the period in fashion were directly imitated, but the Georgian revival has not been followed in this literal sense by Regency and Victorian revivals. Even the most eclectic of present-day architects, however conscientious he felt about being in the *avant-garde* of fashion, would not dream of designing a new town hall in the style of Cuthbert Brodrick.

We may come to that; but probably not. Obvious complications arise when the cycle of taste brings us round to the point of reviving period styles that are themselves revivals. The "period revival" architecture of today takes the form either of a continuation of the

post-war Georgian revival, with certain modifications and mannerisms made fashionable by particular individuals, like Sir Edwin Lutyens, or—more commonly—of an impure eclecticism that does not claim to re-embodiment the spirit of any one period but uses the superficial trappings of style as a kind of architectural shorthand which has the convenience of offering a rule-of-thumb solution to all design problems. The fact that the "styles" so utilized include the modernistic is an interesting illustration of the confusion that arises when the periods subject to revival become so imprecise (and the process of acceleration I have already referred to becomes so marked) that a stylistic revival can take place before the period it is based on is ended.

But the incidence of period revivals of various kinds—whether as pure pastiche or as a sort of mixed bag of familiar motifs for architects to draw on—is not what I wanted to write about this month. I have already dealt with some of these questions in previous articles. What I am interested in is that this automatically changing cycle of taste does continue whether other factors allow it to develop into a straightforward period revival or not. Although we cannot be said to have undergone a Regency or Victorian revival, nevertheless, in a different way, the effect of the cycle that has brought these periods successively into fashion has been very marked. Superficially the Regency revival never went further than a vogue in interior decoration and in the settings for sophisticated *revues*, and similarly, in a strictly architectural sense, the Victorian revival has been confined to bunches of waxed flowers on up-to-date mantelpieces and to a renewed connoisseurship of Victoriana amongst interior decorators; for example a new curiosity about the contents of the Great Exhibition building of 1851 as well as about its structure.

But the architectural examples that immediately reflect it are a very small part of the influence of changing taste. The revival of interest is as important as the revival of practice. We have acquired a much deeper interest in the nineteenth century, and a more sincere appreciation of it, than these superficial instances of fashion represent. Now that time has removed many of our prejudices, we can enjoy finding how much akin Victorian aspirations were to ours. Far from being comic, Victorian ebullience has a conviction that we can envy, and its persistent introduction of moral issues into matters of taste is a thing our own modernists are by no means innocent of. But it is an unprofitable occupation at this stage trying to disentangle genuine aesthetic appreciation from fellow feeling for an age faced with similar problems, and both of these from the modishness that makes the intelligentsia find attractive what other people despise and makes them endow with period charm what to the less sensitive are still the stale commonplaces of yesterday.

What is more interesting is to look ahead and try to imagine how the cycle of taste that allows mid-Victorian products to be the subject of interest at this moment—but has prevented them from being so earlier—will one day bring our own products to light again as the discoveries first of all of the intelligentsia of, presumably, the nineteen-eighties, and then as the period most commonly admired in the nineteen-nineties. It would be unduly cynical, of course, to dismiss the development

of taste as solely a matter of waiting for the next period that is due for revival to come round. We cannot predict exactly what our tastes are going to be during the next half century. I suppose, assuming that the acceleration we have noted will continue, that we can expect a pre-Raphaelite revival in the arts in about 1950, and perhaps a period of renewed admiration for Ruskinian Italianate Gothic, followed by one of admiration for terra-cotta, as used by Paul Waterhouse, in 1960. But so many factors are apt to intervene, especially those concerned with the balance of social forces, that it is useless to speculate in detail. We can generalize, however, and foresee a time when our present age, in some degree or other, has become the subject of renewed curiosity, or emulation, and even—so strongly are our historical memories coloured by having to serve also as a mirror of our own aspirations—of envy.

How will our own architecture appear to our grandchildren when it re-emerges in fifty or sixty years' time from its inevitable period of obscurity, and the time comes for them to re-discover its virtues? In trying to answer this question we are faced with two difficulties; that is, with two new factors whose effect it is not easy to predict. One of them is concerned with the less consistent nature of our present-day taste, and the other with building technique. It is nothing new for the taste of one age to show internal conflicts; what is different about the present is that the internal conflicts are ones of intention as well as manner. It cannot be too clearly emphasized, if we are to get our historical perspective right, that in spite of the publicity given to the Battles of the Styles, the various parties who struggled for pre-eminence throughout the nineteenth century had on the whole more in common than in opposition. Their battle was one of preferences amongst applied styles; it was a matter of setting one series of arguments, ethical, moral, aesthetic and utilitarian, against another. The rightness of applied styles as such was not called into question; for even though such philosophers as Pugin and Ruskin—to bracket together two people who in their lifetime would have admitted to nothing in common but a hatred for each other's works—saw architecture more whole than their contemporaries, they saw it only as a re-embodiment of an idealized past. Since then more things than the application of past styles have gone into the melting-pot, and nothing in the way of a universal contemporary spirit has yet come out—only the negative results of iconoclasm and inconclusive experiments without number.

Our conscientious iconoclasm, moreover, has been intellectually inspired. It is not sufficiently remembered that even what is known as the "modern movement" in architecture was a conscious aesthetic movement first and a technical one afterwards. And one result of this has been to make absolute the separation between a vernacular and a sophisticated architecture, a separation that had of course begun in Victorian times. We cannot look to the sophisticated architecture of our day to provide a subject of revivalist enthusiasm fifty years hence. Despite conflicts of style we can now see Victorian architecture as infused with a consistent and characteristic Victorian spirit more vivid than the period characteristics in which it was embodied. The work of our own architects will show no such spirit; for it has nothing like the same unity.



For some while we have been able to appreciate the rather romantic grace of early Victorian architecture (of which this street at Leamington is typical) as well as the more orthodox Georgian—



—but we are only just beginning once more to like its mid-Victorian equivalent, such as this Gothic villa at Derby, which belongs to the period that is now emerging from the obscurity and contempt which the architecture of the immediate past inevitably suffers. Not only are we able to appreciate the idiom it employs now that we see its background in proper perspective, but time has matured its materials and mellowed its colours, giving it unity.



Presumably the late Victorian villa, of the type of these specimens at Buxton, will come into its own in due course, when the cycle of taste has brought their period round into the limelight. At the moment they are too close to our own immediate past and their materials still appear rather hard and unsympathetic—



—but will our own domestic vernacular ever acquire the charm of its predecessors? In due course this somewhat barren scene will no doubt be clothed in vegetation, as the previous one is already, but is the craftsmanship of the houses such as will mellow with age or will they become shoddy instead?

To evoke the spirit of our time our grandchildren will have to look instead to our vernacular architecture.

Now, so absolute has the separation become between architects' architecture and anonymous or vernacular architecture that the latter is often denied existence altogether in the contemporary world. But we do possess a vernacular architecture, as consistent and easily recognizable as that of Georgian England. It might also be called Building Society's architecture or speculator's architecture. It is to be found in every new estate developed on the outskirts of our big cities and wherever a new branch railway or arterial bus-route creates a dormitory town overnight. It may not be the cause of much pride to people who look at it from the superior heights of architectural sophistication, but it is the true folk architecture of our day. It is in this that future generations are likely to see the spirit of our own age still living. The nostalgic eye of 1990 will find its romance in the curving streets of our garden suburbs, lined with red-roofed villas whose timbered gables peep from behind shrubberies and trees that the intervening years will have made more luxuriant than they are now. That eye will savour the calculated romance of the skyline that always curves enticingly out of sight, leaving the ruled vista as the hall-mark of the city slum. It will cultivate a connoisseurship in front-garden layouts, in crazy paving, in rockeries, in lychgate porches with coloured glass set in jazz-patterned leading. The corner pillar-box will evoke a world of association; so will the mottled buff wall-paper with a stuck-on frieze of galleons in full sail and the green vitriolite splash-back behind the basin in the bathroom whose impressive appointments did so much to get the signature of the occupant on to the hire-purchase agreement.

The potential romance in these all too familiar scenes is self-evident; the other side of the picture, that which we find so contemptible today, will not be so apparent. We curse the speculative builder's estates for eating up the countryside, but our grandchildren will no more have known an England without them than we knew an England without the early nineteenth-century streets and squares that did the same thing in their time. We also condemn the spuriousness of the half-inch planking nailed to the gable in the fashion of timber framing and the obvious absurdity of the villa that apes in its costume the feudal pomp of the manor-house, but our descendants who see it all in perspective will realize that such period trappings no more pretend to be the real thing than Euston arch pretends that it stands on the Acropolis. When they are used as a matter of convention, forming the idiom of a folk architecture, details like gables and chimney pots become symbols, not bits of architecture; and their vividness as symbols will give them added charm in the eyes of people who see as a whole the cultural scheme in which this elaborate system of symbolism evolved. The sham gable is in any case no better or worse than the grained woodwork we now find so fetching in the Victorian pub. The cycle of taste brings each into the limelight in turn.

The grounds on which it seems, however, that this automatically recurrent cycle may break down are of a different kind: they are physical ones. For although I have stressed the development of taste as a simple chronological affair, there is another way in which the time factor works. The lapse of eighty or a hundred years not only means that our preferences in architecture have changed, but that the architecture has itself changed. It has matured; acquired a patina such as only time can manufacture. And

patina, though the critic who likes to see things in clear-cut terms of obedience or disobedience to a set of rules seldom admits it, plays a definite part in building up the charm of architecture. What actually happens when a hitherto neglected period swims once more into the limelight is that one day, after we have looked for years at some building and seen nothing in it but the negative qualities most street scenery contains for us, we look again and find that it has acquired a bloom or patina it never had before, and has come alive. Partly this change is in our own vision; the building in the course of time has acquired personality or power to evoke a period. But partly it is a simple physical phenomenon. The brickwork has mellowed; the chocolate brown or bottle-green paint has faded to that grey-purple colour or that chalky blue that can hardly be matched with new colours; the slates have a mottled silver sheen where a film of soot has been left by the rain; all sorts of small changes of colour and texture have taken place to unite the building into one significant whole.

Now this process is clearly dependent on the behaviour of materials. It is just in the course of taking place in the mid-Victorian villa, but can we rely on its happening satisfactorily to the speculative villa of today? The front gardens and the tree-lined streets, as I have said, will mature and their vegetation become more appropriately luxuriant. But our experience of the houses themselves does not lead us to expect them to mellow or mature with time. It is simply a matter of a less solid habit of building, leaving less chance of beauty in old age. Instead of the beauty of matured materials shall we not only find peeling plaster, gaping doorframes where the wood has warped, the curled surfaces of unseasoned timber and ugly patches where damp has penetrated the walls? It is not a promising prospect and although, for the very same reason, these pathetic specimens of building craft will symbolize even more successfully than we should like the age they belong to, we cannot visualize them as having any of the pictorial charm, after sixty years of wear, that we see in their prototypes today. Their interest as a social document is another matter.

It may be, of course, that a new outlook on obsolescence in building will in any case have put a stop by then to this cycle of recurring admiration and disrepute; but whether such changes come about or not, the moral of our present uncertainty as to how the folk architecture of our day will look in that of our grandchildren is obvious. Taste is a matter of dispute and is continually changing, so that in the end all is much of a muchness; but, taste apart, build well. To build badly sacrifices the chances of eventual salvation; the chances of eventually making up on the swings of fashion what we have lost on the roundabouts of change.

How this admirably equitable system of aesthetic stabilization is affected by the new machine aesthetic that modern architecture has introduced, which trades on the perpetual brightness of synthetic materials and is everlasting brand new, instead of awaiting the patina of age, is another story. Our own story is that although no one in his senses builds for posterity—everything was brand new to begin with, even that which we admire most for its mellowness today—and if modern architecture and modern materials are either not planned to last beyond our time or devised to remain perpetually brand new, well and good; but when we build in the traditional fashion, one subject to the traditional changes that time brings, we might as well make sure that the changes are not inevitably for the worse. For it is not only the speculative villa, amongst our present-day architecture, that will make a poor ruin.

HYDRANGEA FERREA SIEVEKINGII



1

By Lance Sieveking

BETWEEN the sidewalk and the street was a strip of grass, and on the grass a mid-Victorian dressmaker's dummy: one of those things you come across in the lumber-room of any country house, relic of the days when Parker made Grandmamma's dresses. I paused, and photographed it. Several people regarded me with surprise and even suspicion; but I have been taking photographs ever since I was so high, and nothing short of a blow that strikes the camera from my hand will stop me.

And, as I stood on that sidewalk in Ottawa and looked at the dressmaker's dummy (knowing, of course, that it was a hydrant), it came to me that in its design it summed up its city; it was an epitome; its shape was the shape of Ottawa. Its single, conventionalized bosom, its prim yet perky stance, the severe yet shapely folds of the dress, and, above all, the bustle: these told me volumes about Ottawa and the people of Ottawa—volumes which, needless to say, will here be compressed into a few lines.

Ottawa is a mid-Victorian city. The centre of it stands on the summit of a high slope above a noble river, and the Government buildings, round which everything is grouped, are in the manner of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster (with a tincture of Scottish hydro'). The stone is rather harder and of a more tedious grey and, as was inevitable, the general proportions and the detail are even more depressing, and the ironwork excrescences more void of sensibility—inevitable, that is, once its builders had made the mistake of imitating an imitation. What a pity that, half a century ago, the Canadians did not imitate something at its source, if they themselves had, at that time, nothing particular to express. Shapes at third hand cease to have even the active vices of clichés. They become positively negative, a state which though admirable in photography is damnable in architecture. What will men think of Canadian civilization when they pick about among its nineteenth-century remains in a thousand years' time? For peoples are to some extent judged by their architecture.

I stood on the snow-covered grass outside the Parliament buildings, and looked north, south, east and west: and it seemed to me that Ottawa had a Chirico quality. Many of Chirico's paintings, as you will remember, are composed of two wardrobes, a chair, half a bed, and a bust of Augustus Caesar, grouped together in the middle of an apparently limitless desert. Ottawa gave me that feeling. Here, upon this hill, stands this small nineteenth-century city, and beyond it, abruptly, on every side, an uninhabited flatness without end. Actually, this is an illusion; across the river is a straggling French town, while at other points of the compass are the old wooden frame-houses of the poorer folk, and perky "residential" neighbourhoods. These are out of sight from where I stood. To the north of the broad tree-flanked avenue which curved up one side of the hill and down the other, stands the mid-Victorian Parliament, well back across a very wide expanse of grass. While on the south side is a long row of high box-like office buildings which must have been put up around 1875, and which are without grace. But in the centre of this galaxy of dullness stands the Rideau Club which, by reason of its neighbours, has the air of a French lady of quality, with its reasonably designed façade and arched balcony of satisfying proportions. I have always had a penchant for French ladies with nice façades and satisfying proportions, and I noted the Rideau Club with approval.

There is nothing which can form quite such a pleasant background to life as collecting things. People collect paper-weights, musical boxes, stamps, big-game heads, bus-tickets, and suits of armour. Stealing and murder are within the code for all of them. But I find

that you can travel lighter, and avoid the police more easily, if you leave the things you are collecting where you find them—nevertheless adding them to your collection in the authentic manner. This you may do by photographing them; a new kind of African big-game hunter has recently come into existence who is adopting this course. Indeed, it is one you are simply obliged to adopt if, for example, you collect cathedrals, or, as I did, hydrants.

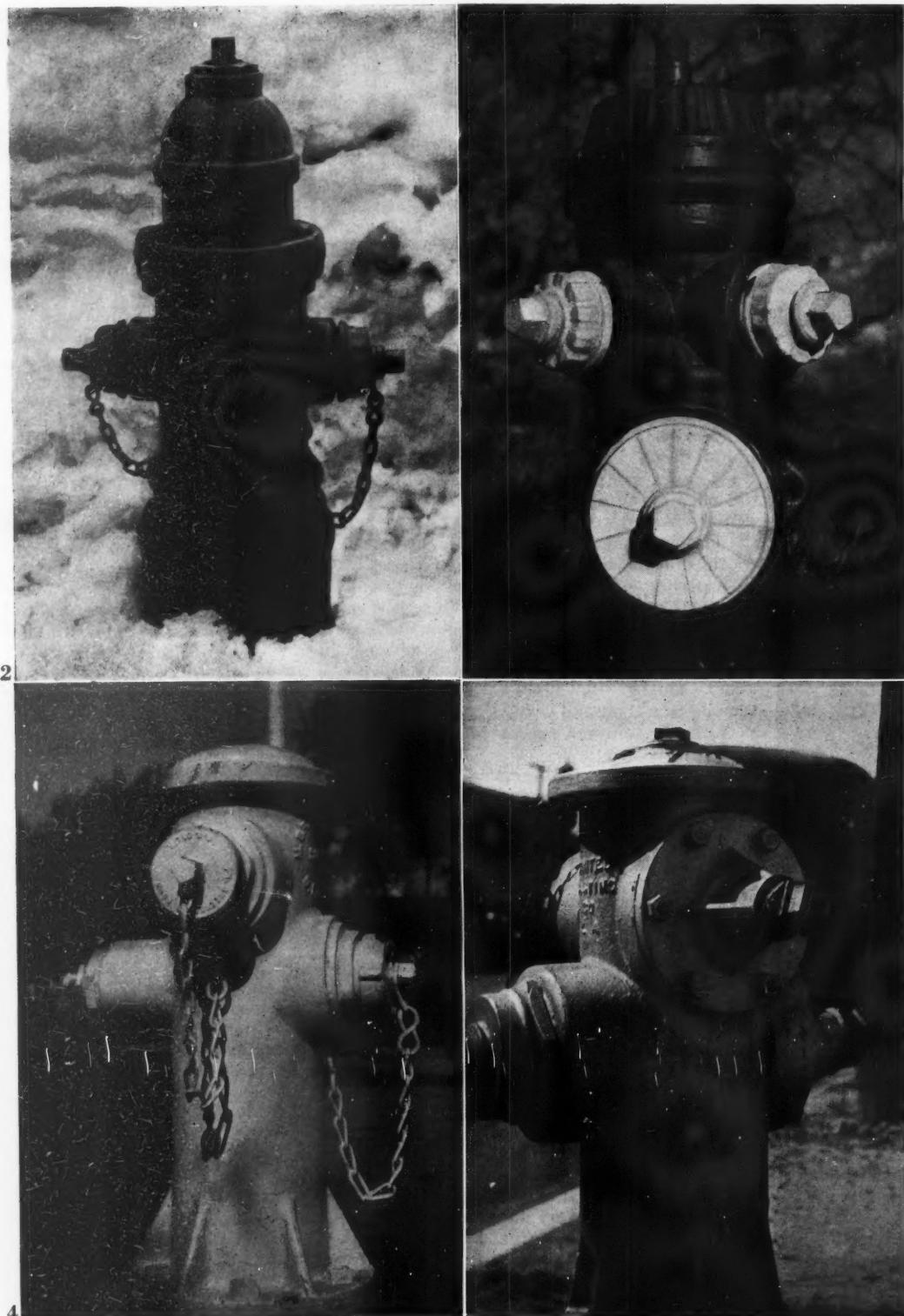
When, after the Ottawa Revelation, I perceived their intrinsic beauty and significance, I collected hydrants all over North America. And the more I collected the more was my original vision confirmed and restated. They are unintentional symbols of the most instructive kind. Each in its different vivid fashion epitomizes the character of its environment. I have only to glance at a photograph of one of them for the whole place that it represents to rise, as they say, before my mind's eye.

I wish I could display before your wondering and envious gaze my entire collection, reserving until the last some gem, some rare and very perfect example—nay, perhaps even a Unique Specimen! Not a mere single hydrant, one of a hundred identical hydrants in any particular city, but a single, un-repeated hydrant, designed by the celebrated R—when at the height of his career, for the garden of the ill-starred Madame de Q—.

But I must content myself with a small selection. On this and the following page you will see five charmingly diverse examples of the hydrant's art; looking, grouped thus, almost like some kind of lively little ballet—a sort of small mechanized ballet. The first specimen, 1 (at the beginning of this article), is the *Hydrangea Ferrea Callipygis Sievekingii Ottawensis*, and I think you will admit the resemblance to a dressmaker's dummy, and not be put out by the use of the epithet *Callipygis* to indicate the bustle. The second, 2, the little black dancing figure with chains attached to both wrists, is on the hillside below Quebec Citadel, the other side from the one Wolfe rushed up. It was standing in a hole scooped out of eight or ten feet of snow when I found it. I should like to call your attention to the similarity between it and the Ottawa specimen. Though at first glance they seem as different as possible, though while Ottawa seems so prim Quebec has such a gay and skittish air, yet, nevertheless, they have a fundamental quality in common—a mid-Victorian quality. Perhaps this is not so obvious in the Quebec specimen, but to the perceptive eye of the collector it is there. This little object seems to reveal a character reminiscent of provincial France in the eighteen-sixties; a society remote from current fashions; a conventional, Catholic society; in some respects strict, in some respects hard; a society however which, though somewhat prim, still had a wink up its sleeve with which to twinkle across its moustache-cups at the girls. Provincial moments of old-fashioned gaiety seemed to be hinted at—wine-warmed bonhomies.

I collected this specimen on a return visit, after I had been in Canada for several months, and so I knew all about

A NOTE ON HYDRANGEA FERREA SIEVEKINGII



2, *Hydrangea Ferrea Saltatrix Sievekingii Quebecensis*. 3, *Hydrangea Ferrea Mamillana Sievekingii Vancouverinsularis*. 4, *Hydrangea Ferrea Fumifuga Sievekingii Franciscana*. 5, *Hydrangea Ferrea Proterva Sievekingii Sacroboscensis*. The specimen at the beginning of the article is *Hydrangea Ferrea Callipygis Sievekingii Ottawensis*.

the (even to an Englishman) astonishing drinking laws of most of the Provinces. But the five and a half million French Canadians drink wine and permit themselves to drink it at reasonable times in reasonable places, and for this much ought to be overlooked which otherwise might bring out the censorious side of a passing traveller.

On the whole I am inclined to think that my little *Hydrangea Ferrea Saltatrix Quebecensis*,

though an ornament to any collection, was rather optimistic in its hints about the character of the community in which it finds itself. If the chains are intended to remind us of the "Padlock Law" that so startles the unsuspecting democratic visitor, then one can only say that they are too pretty, and the whole attitude of the *Hydrangea Ferrea Saltatrix* seems rather to suggest a listener to the echo of the Offenbach flavour which

Quebec undoubtedly has, on a fine day. If those lovely early eighteenth-century houses on that great terrace that faces the Quebec Parliament Buildings were to be translated into sound, I feel sure it would take form as the music of Offenbach. But there would be what the swing orchestra men call a "sour note" in the middle of it, and that would be the ill-judged skyscraper they have recently put up, which dominates the town, and from some angles succeeds in throwing the placid symmetry the place once had completely over one shoulder into Satan's eye!

The next example, 3, *Hydrangea Ferrea Mamillana Vancouverinsularis*, was collected over three thousand miles west of Quebec, as the name suggests, on Vancouver Island. In it, too, you may see vestiges of the mid-Victorian flavour which runs right through Canada; though here it has been subjected to considerable modifications. This eighteen-seventy-fiveishness that one cannot help perceiving all over Canada, is, I guess, profoundly significant of all manner of things.

The mid-Victorianity of this specimen has been modified by the Pacific Ocean. This is a different kind of country and a different kind of people. With its multiplicity of breasts *Hydrangea Ferrea Mamillana Sievekingii Vancouverinsularis* undoubtedly resembles Diana of the Ephesians, a fact which the artist probably intended to be symbolic of the more generous climate of the west. This, of course, is only a guess, and it is more than likely that the retired colonels, who inhabit this part of the country, would insist that, far from being Diana-like breasts, they are conventionalized machine-guns, giving forth a deadlier sort of milk. Be that as it may, I feel confident that all collectors will agree that this specimen is a really beautiful example of the Middle Period, which thrives in the dry, sunny atmosphere of the Pacific Coast.

Specimens 4 and 5 present a complete contrast to all other types, and were discovered by me respectively at San Francisco and Hollywood. The first thing we notice in both of them is the Oriental note, obviously caused by the proximity of Japan and China. When one considers what large numbers of Chinese and Japanese ships pass through such a port as San Francisco every year, one cannot regard it as altogether surprising that hydranteers in this part of America have fallen under the influence of Oriental art. It is interesting to observe, too, that not only are these two specimens positively oriental in design and feeling, which implies a certain ancientness of style, but that at one and the same time they succeed in being strikingly modern in character.

Hydrangea Ferrea Fumifuga Sievekingii Franciscana, 4, seems to be wearing a kind of conventionalized gas mask (*fumifuga!*) with a chain attached to the tip of it. The left arm is similarly chained, but not the right. It wears a little flat, round hat, and a straight, waistless gown, with six stylized folds at the bottom of it. To analyse in detail the symbolism of all this would lead me into an impenetrable forest of speculation. Nevertheless, I consider that this hydrant, too, in its own vivid fashion, epitomises the character of its environment.

In its design it sums up its city. Its shape is the shape of San Francisco. What was the year of the great earthquake that reduced most of 'Frisco to ruins? 1906? Or was that the Belle of New York? Somewhere in the early years of this century there was a tremendous earthquake, and in a few minutes a place which was universally agreed to be The Wickedest City in the World, The Hottest Spot on the Coast, was smoking ruins. This was a great pity, not because it interrupted a lot of Vice - on - a - Gigantic - Scale; that can always pull itself together and get started again with the help of a few public-spirited citizens. But the earthquake destroyed most of the astonishing feats of architecture which were the palaces of the Goldrush Kings of Other Days. Way back in the eighteen-sixties all kinds of rough and ignorant men became fabulously rich overnight and fetched up at 'Frisco with the intention of cutting a dash. The dashes that some of them cut, were, I believe, worth travelling half round the world to see. Money being less than no object, the immense size and madness of these houses, the fantastic richness of the materials used, and the prodigious ugliness of the finished edifice, had already become legendary long before the opening of the twentieth century. Marble, malachite and macassar; Honduras, Gaboon and Cuba mahogany; lava, granite, sandstone, slate; gilt-brass and mother - of - pearl; antique glass and alabaster; glass stained and fired, and brilliant-cut and triple-embossed; glass in domes and lanterns and clerestories; painted coffers and panels of sgraffito, mosaic and intaglii; inlays, overlays, flutes, frets and dentils; machicolations and vermiculations; scrolls, ogees, swags, tympanums, pediments, pilasters, volutes, urns, and ornaments; Gothic, Egyptian, Tudor, Renaissance, Norman, English Colonial and Classic Greek: all found themselves together in one mansion. But why go on? Why tear my heart to shreds before your eyes? I shall never see those crazy splendours, alas! In 1906 nearly all of them were swept away. And, what is more, the hydrant which epitomized all that, if it ever existed, cannot now be traced. Thus *Fumifuga Franciscana* belongs to the San Francisco of to-day, a city of surpassing beauty, of airy lightness, planned to make the best use of its situation on a series of hills set about a gigantic bay, and full of lovely people. But (and I cannot restrain a sigh) it is not The Wickedest City of the Wide-Open West.

And finally we have *Proterva Sacroboscensis*, 5, that piece of forward-pussishness from the Holy Wood. A very nice little specimen. I collected it on a vacant lot not far from the Garden of Allah, off Sunset Boulevard, in Hollywood, California. And it seems to me to epitomise Hollywood to a T. The chief detail is exceedingly symbolic: the brainbox is chained. Notice also that the limbs are as free as air. The face is a synthesis of half a dozen of the most popular styles of female beauty: perfection of feature combined with complete absence of expression. The hat is Chinese. *But*: the brainbox is chained.

BOOKS

The Humane Industrialist

BRASS CHANDELIER. By R. D. Best. London: Allen and Unwin. Price 15s.

WHEN Schinkel, the great Greek revival architect, travelled in England with Beuth, president of the Prussian Board of Trade, in 1826, they visited new and old buildings, museums and private art collections, but most of their time they spent in admiring and studying the achievements of British engineers such as the suspension bridges of Bangor and Conway, factory buildings with steel beams and steel joists, the steam heating of hospitals, water closets, automatic door closers, Macadam's road surfaces, British factories such as Boulton & Watt's, Wedgwood's and Owen's in Lanark, and the London showrooms of machine manufacturers such as Holtzapfel and Deiderlein, and especially Bramah, the inventor of the hydraulic press and the Bramah lock. British engineering was recognized as foremost in the world.

Now Robert Hall Best (1843-1923), the Birmingham manufacturer of lighting fittings, whose life story is told by his son R. D. Best in this well-produced book, was the son of R. Best, the owner of a small lamp factory, and the grandson of Joseph Hall who had started in a small way and, by inventing the modern puddling process, had become one of the owners of a leading iron-making firm. The name of the firm was first Bradley, Barrows & Hall and then Bramah, Barrows & Hall. Thus Best's life is linked up with the great English tradition of 1775-1825.

When he went, at the age of nineteen, to Germany, Bonn was chosen as the town in which he should

live and learn the language, and the impression of Germany conveyed in his letters home is still that of the pre-industrial country of Schinkel. We read his descriptions of chestnut trees in blossom and nightingales, of professors in smoking-caps, and happy youths walking home through the cloudless night from a cheerful yet innocent party with May bowl and the singing of quartets, and of classic German literature and opera. Not a reference occurs to factories or commerce.

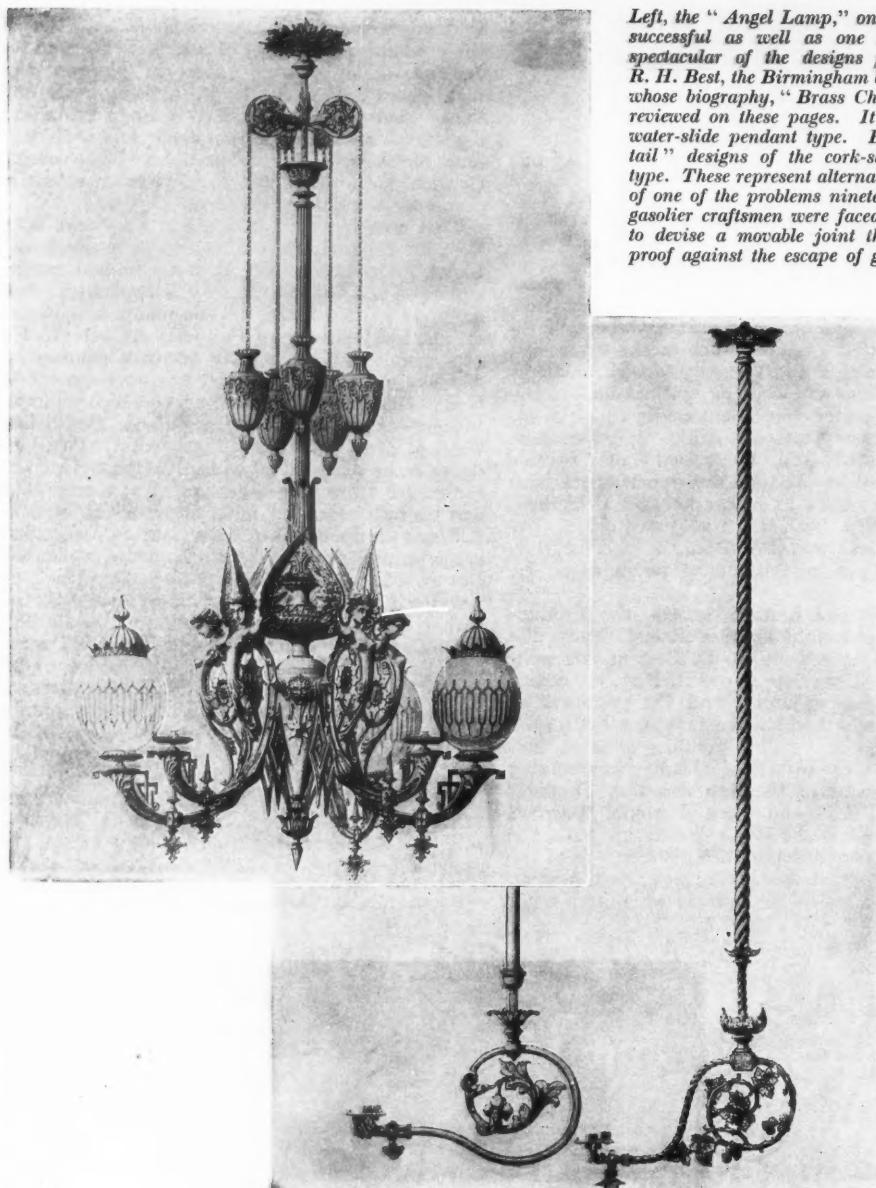
That was in 1862. Less than ten years later Best, by then the head of a new firm, Best and Lloyd, had realized that at Bonn he had caught a glimpse of a Germany rapidly disappearing. And much as he had loved this Germany, he did not lament the "passing of the Schubert type." He kept going to Germany as his own commercial traveller and watching closely the development of German industry, inventive genius and social institutions—as attentively as Schinkel and Beuth had watched British industry fifty years before. In doing so, he was painfully aware all the time of the contrast between Germany full of new enterprise and his own country "falling behind," as he puts it, "as a civilized state." Germany to him meant progress, and progress kept wisely under control. Not even the years preceding the last war and the war itself altered his admiration. His son, the author of his biography, was sent to study architecture and design under Wilhelm Kreis of Dusseldorf, and got the suggestion for his most successful design, the famous "Bestlite" lamp, from a German source, a lamp by Christian Dill.* Thus the appreciation of Germany, initiated as far back as 1862, still inspired the attitude of a new generation three-quarters of a century later.

Yet within this appreciation interesting changes of emphasis had taken place. To R. D. Best, the son, the Germany of 1910 and 1930 meant the Modern Movement. To his father it had first meant

* Illustrated in *Die Form*, 1929, p. 345.



The old Doric beam engine which produced the power for R. H. Best's Birmingham brass manufactory until as recently as 1907. "Bought second-hand from a Lancashire cotton-mill, this highly efficient and architecturally conceived mechanism gave the greatest satisfaction and pride . . . its slow-moving beam, comprising gentle curves and flanges, had domed ends, and these, bowing sedately, somehow suggested the bald head of the proprietor. The beam was supported on a small cast-iron Doric temple, complete with fluted columns, entasis, frieze, triglyphs, architrave and all. The flywheel, measuring 18 ft. in diameter, was built of six segments bolted together, and was driven by a stately connecting-rod of pleasant lines and proportions. From its link action to its governor balls, it is clear that the designers were concerned with things over and above mere mechanical efficiency."—From "Brass Chandelier."



Left, the "Angel Lamp," one of the most successful as well as one of the most spectacular of the designs produced by R. H. Best, the Birmingham brass worker, whose biography, "Brass Chandelier," is reviewed on these pages. It was of the water-slide pendant type. Below, "pig-tail" designs of the cork-slide pendant type. These represent alternative solutions of one of the problems nineteenth century gasolier craftsmen were faced with: how to devise a movable joint that was also proof against the escape of gas.

of the old steam engine of stately Doric design (see previous page), he still found that it would cost him 75 per cent. more than the system of a hundred years before. 1907 incidentally was also the time when business methods at Best and Lloyd's were drastically modernized. Until then they must have been very patriarchal according to the author's entertaining descriptions.

But the chapters on the running of Best's business do not concern us here. Professor Sargent Florence in his introduction to the book has emphasized their interest to the economist and the historian of industry.

He also rightly stresses what enjoyable reading Mr. R. D. Best's book makes. Thanks to the personal charm of its author, it has become in its ultimate published form a remarkable document of culture, tact, and well-informed documentation, the very contrary of what one would expect from the biography of a Birmingham manufacturer by a Birmingham manufacturer.

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

SHORTER NOTICES

ENGLISH CASTLES. By John Summerson. Peacock Books (Collins: London). Price 3s.

A POPULAR history of English castles was an admirable thing to include in this new series of copiously illustrated little books. The subject is a perpetually fascinating one and the information about castles to be found in the ordinary guide book is usually confined to tedious anecdotes about the personages connected with them, or architectural notes of a dry antiquarian kind. The general public can well do with a cheap book that sums up in words and pictures the social and cultural background that can bring the individual specimens to life.

How well the book under review succeeds in doing this can be stated shortly. First, the text is first-rate. It is a masterly piece of compression in which Mr. Summerson conceals his erudition in a charming historical essay that covers the whole development of castle building in a most illuminating way. Unlike guide-book writers and antiquarians he gives due space to the romantic castle builders of the Gothic revival period, thereby not only increasing the scope of the book but, by implication, indicating the largely romantic origin of the castle styles of some earlier periods. Secondly, the illustrations are admirably chosen, showing the author's rare knowledge of the documentation of the subject. Thirdly, the colour reproduction is deplorable. The point of this series of books is that each contains a number of colour plates, illustrating the subject from contemporary sources. *English Castles* has eleven of these, mostly from water-colours by such people as David Cox, Cotman and Turner of Oxford. But as printed they are a travesty of the originals, resembling more than anything else the least pleasing kind of colour-film. Finally, the jacket is quite exceptionally hideous.

SOUND TRANSMISSION IN BUILDINGS. By R. Fitzmaurice and William Allen. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office. Price 4s.

THIS is a report of research work undertaken jointly by the Building Research Station and the National Physical Laboratory, and is a model of how the results of technical research should be presented. The text is brief and to the point and deals with problems in terms of the architect's realities instead of the scientist's abstractions. Much of the information is given in the form of tables and clearly drawn diagrams. The three parts into which it is divided deal respectively with the transmission of noise through the structure of buildings, with the insulation necessary to reduce the effect of noise transmission in normally constructed buildings, and with the possibilities of discontinuous construction, *i.e.*, construction that would prevent the transmission itself from taking place.

Such reports as this, and the thorough research-work they indicate, evoke once more the sentiment: how sad it is that the architectural profession and the Building Research Station are not linked by closer ties than the casual scientific curiosity of individual architects. If, as is certain, architecture considered as a social service suffers from having insufficient data about both means and ends, and if research as good as this can be done when facilities exist, it should be only a short step to an integrated system in which the work is automatically based on existing knowledge and the research is based on existing needs.

Schubert. Then, between 1875 and 1900, roughly speaking, he had admired Germany as the country of industrial enterprise and initiative, until, after 1900, his attention had been focussed on German social progress. He now compared the German beer garden frequented by families with the English pub that draws husbands from their wives; he compared what seemed to him the harmless effects of German beer with drunkenness in England; he compared discipline in Germany with slackness at home, and, above all, the approach to education in the two countries. What is especially interesting in this connection is his struggle for the introduction of trade continuation schools on German lines into England, with afternoon classes for apprentices for which employers should grant the necessary hours off without deduction of wages. He secured the support of Birmingham manufacturers in the brass trade and the Board of Education, and was just fighting the cause out with the principal of the Birmingham School of Arts and Crafts, a convinced Morrisite, when the outbreak of the last war brought it all to an end, and this excellent scheme, as topical today as it was thirty years ago, was shelved indefinitely.

From the correspondence between Best and the head of the art school it appears that the Morris Movement cannot have touched Best at all. The fact that England, after having taken the initial and leading part in the evolution of machine industry, was now taking the initial and leading part in the reaction against uncontrolled machine industry, remained concealed from him.

He had read Ruskin, but taken from him only the appeal to honesty, understood by him as conscientious imitation of period forms and their adaptation to the requirements of the gasolier (see illustration above). To him the Arts and Crafts or *Art Nouveau* (he calls them "Guild of Handicraft" style—a compliment to Mr. Ashbee's old Guild and School of Handicraft, founded in 1888 and so prolific in new forms of artistic metal work) and "Queen Anne" were all the same, trade fashions to be complied with. The Modern Movement, though already strong in Germany in 1910, when he first met Dr. Kerschensteiner, the leader of the continuation school and monotechnic ideas, he does not seem to have noticed. The need for abandoning period styles had not been seen by him. This was left to his son. Thus the necessity for the introduction of new forms, when gas chandeliers were replaced by electric chandeliers, was bound to escape him too. He accepted the alabaster bowls which in 1910—as late as that—were brought from Italy by his sales director. That is as far as he went.

Altogether it is interesting to watch how late inventions became commercially effective. As a rule we take the dates of inventions as we know them and imagine these dates to correspond roughly to their universal acceptance. That is a mistake. Murdoch's gas lighting dates from 1792, Siemens's dynamo from 1867. But Best's most successful gas pendant, the "Surprise" (strangely similar in its ingenious movements to his son's Bestlite), had its boom between 1895 and 1905. And when in 1907 he decided to run his works on electricity instead

Architects have become more aware of the usefulness of the Building Research Station through its A.R.P. bulletins and similar war-time publications. These might well be made a precedent for a regular series of reports on the relative merits of proprietary building materials after the war—fulfilling a need that has often been discussed, but one which demands the authority of a Government department. Even this, however, would leave much to be done. For research involves analysing building needs as well as testing its resources.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE MACHINE AGE. By Eric Gill. No. 6 of the Christian News-letter Books. London: The Sheldon Press. Price 1s. 6d.

THIS book, one of a series designed to assist thought upon the relation of the Christian faith to present problems, was obviously up the street of Eric Gill, who touched nothing for which he did not atone. As a controversialist he had two outstanding qualities: he knew all about his own cosmos, which he declared to be a Christian one, and he could write about the religious life without either affectation or self-consciousness. In his hands the traditional phraseology of the Christian creeds and churches becomes pleasingly metaphorical. Nothing can be said of God save by analogy; therefore the chief difficulty is the choice of analogies. He chooses the traditional Christian ones in favour of metaphysical speculation, but he knows what he is doing, for, as he says, the man who plunges into the sea of Christian analogies must have a certain courage, "not fearing, on the one hand, the brutal ignorance of those sea-monsters for whom 'material' good is the only good, or, on the other, the gibes and taunts of those more elegant inhabitants of the deep who, travelling in all the oceans, knowing all the philosophies, imagine themselves to be grown up and unable to become as little children. The Blessed Trinity! What's the good of that to me? asks the financier or the organizer of football pools. The Blessed Trinity! Shall we, then, in heaven see the three Blessed Persons sitting in a row? asks the sceptic. We must leave these questions; this is not the book in which to answer them. I am only concerned here to disarm the criticism that, in attempting to state the truth about God, Christians are attempting the impossible. We know that."

The essential fact to Eric Gill is that Christianity makes material goods and riches and earthly power, including the arts both useful and fine, seem of small account in themselves, and chiefly valuable as a means to a proper human life, "for all will be dust in the end." The way of the Machine on the other hand is the way of riches, the way, that is, of selfishness: "The state of the world, the common degradation, vulgarity and indecency of our towns and villages, of our roads and railways, of our household furniture and our clothes—these things, like our murderous wars, our filthy luxury, and our systematic defrauding of the labourer of his just wages, call to heaven for vengeance." The trouble is not so much that men today are enamoured of mechanisms—no more than than a form of infantilism native to the children of the West—the trouble, chiefly, is the insubordination of the men of business. "We have allowed them to usurp the functions of princes. We have enthroned them in the seats of kings. We have made them our rulers and the arbiters of our life. This need not be so; it has not even commonly been so in the history of men. It is . . . a quite modern phenomenon;" for the main idea of Capitalism being what it is (the profit motive) and its instruments being what they are, "the development of its method has been more damaging to the human spirit and to the expression of that spirit in human works than any slavery of the past." And the object of this class of men, the Capitalists? To make things in quantities, by machines. Result the Machine Age, with machines, beautiful though they may be in themselves, designed to produce things which *so made* are not only contrary to the nature of man but contrary to the nature of machinery; the use, to take the obvious example, of machinery to do what we call "ornament," and the designing of machines to make ornaments. For "however little we recognize the fact, ornaments are in their nature a kind of ikons, they are objects of worship. . . . Is not this really obvious? The cheapest nick-nack, the silliest golly-wog, the nudest semi-nude statuette from the West End, all these things are made for the satisfaction of man's natural appetite for ikons, images of his gods." He cannot mass produce his ikons by machines and get away with a hand-made soul.

So there you are. We haven't got a Machine world, but we are moving towards one, and away from the possibility of a Christian world. "Let us then recognize that fact; let us recognize what motives inspired the Machine Age, what ambitions sustain it, and to what end it must proceed."



ABOVE is a recent photograph of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode's printing house, looking down Gunpowder Alley, which runs parallel with Fleet Street, London. This is one of many narrow passages that intersect the maze of ancient buildings north of Gough Square, where in the garret of No. 17 Dr. Johnson produced the Dictionary. Eyre and Spottiswoode are His Majesty's printers and printers of *THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW*, and it was unfortunate that the destruction of their premises by enemy action should have occurred when the January number of the *REVIEW* had just been printed and was still at the printers awaiting binding and distribution.

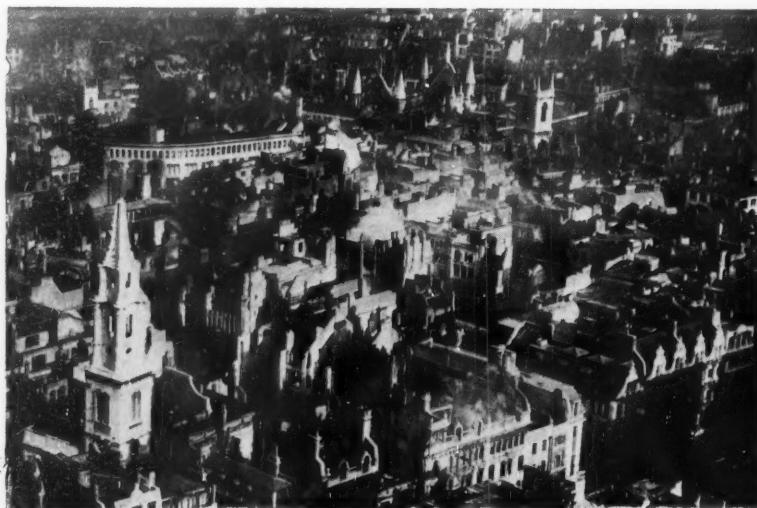
So complete was the scene of desolation the morning after the raid that it was believed that nothing could be saved; indeed firemen were still playing water on the ruins four days later. Not only was everything connected with the January number in the destroyed buildings—machines, type, blocks, printed sheets, original manuscripts and photographs—but much material being prepared for the February number as well, together with nearly all the *REVIEW*'s stock of paper. That is why subscribers did not receive their January number and this number has to serve for both January and February.

Later it was discovered that underneath the debris in the basement of one of the buildings some of the forms from which the *REVIEW* was printed had survived in an undamaged state, together with a number of printed sheets. These were successfully salvaged and the portions of the lost January number they represented have been incorporated in the present number. As it is a Government instruction that paper must not be wasted, such printed sheets as survived have been used again and only reprinted to make them up to the required quantity. That accounts for the otherwise rather puzzling fact that in some copies of the present number the January headline appears on certain pages and the January-February one on others. The other material mentioned is all lost.

It should be added that the complete destruction of all but one of

Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode's buildings was not due to negligence in providing fire-watchers. The enormous destruction elsewhere in the City on the same night has been put down in some cases to that ; but a number of men were on duty on the roofs of the various buildings, and successfully dealt with the first incendiary bombs that fell, but when a second wave of raiders aimed scores of incendiaries simultaneously on these and adjoining unwatched premises, the fires soon spread out of control ; and, aggravated by flaming debris from the adjoining buildings, they eventually took possession of the whole premises. The photograph on the preceding page, of a corner of one of the buildings, shows how completely they were gutted.

The view over central London from neighbouring high ground on that theatrical night showed countless nuclei of fire and a continuous red glow reflected on the clouds of smoke that rolled over it. The human dramas played in the streets and shelters had a setting of Plutonic grandeur. A large proportion of the firelight was provided by Wren churches and other architectural treasures ; a small proportion of the smoke was provided by the burning pages of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW ; and it is not without pride that the REVIEW records that it burnt in good company. For, in common with the people of London, it hopes that the narrow commercial interests that created the dis-harmony and disorder of the city (and were suitably reflected in the insincerity of its business architecture) will not survive this war, and that the principles of order and dignity that the Wren churches may be said to symbolize will be much more typical of the new city we shall build afterwards. In which case even so valuable a burnt offering as the City's architectural treasures will not have been sacrificed for nothing.



Scenes in the City of London after the incendiary raid in which, amongst many other buildings, those belonging to the printers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW were destroyed. Above, looking north-east from the Golden Gallery of St. Paul's (showing the tower of St. Vedast's, Foster Lane, on the left, standing above its ruined nave and chancel, the burnt-out shell of Guildhall in the background and a huge devastated area between) and looking from the burning streets of the City at the dome of St. Paul's rising still intact above the smoke. Right, the banqueting hall at Guildhall.

DECORATION



Along with the kitchen, the bathroom is the room that has seen most changes since the ideas about design generally labelled "modern" came into existence. Nowadays the bathroom, instead of being a poky chamber housing a number of unsightly but necessary pieces of machinery, is itself a neatly designed and smoothly working machine. And aesthetically it is none the worse for that; in fact, many of the improved standards in everyday design that we now have the benefit of were introduced to the public by means of

such things as bathroom fittings. Overleaf the subject of bathroom storage is discussed from the point of view of the decorative effect the designer can derive from it. Above, 1, is an example of the neat stowing away of pipes and the like behind a decorative but sensible panel of white-painted pierced metalwork, in this case in the ground floor washroom of a house in Sussex by Serge Chermayeff. In the mirror can be seen the pigeon-hole clothes lockers which occupy the opposite wall.

Decoration as Storage

The series of articles of which this is the eighth are an attempt to examine the possible decorative use that can be made of one particular function of the interior, namely storage. It will be realized on reflection that it is not far from the truth to say that nearly the whole of interior architecture is concerned with the problem of storage. The designless home is that in which all the owner's possessions are heaped in a litter on the floor; the well-designed home is that in which each object has its appointed place; and the well-decorated home is that in which the necessity of storing innumerable pieces of property is made the opportunity for an interesting sequence of shapes and patterns. The bedroom is as much dominated by the wardrobe and chest-of-drawers as by the bed; the dining-room as much by the china-cabinet as by the table; even the old-

fashioned kitchen was dominated by that obsolete piece of furniture the dresser, while the modern kitchen often appears to consist of nothing but an array of cupboards from floor to ceiling and wall to wall.

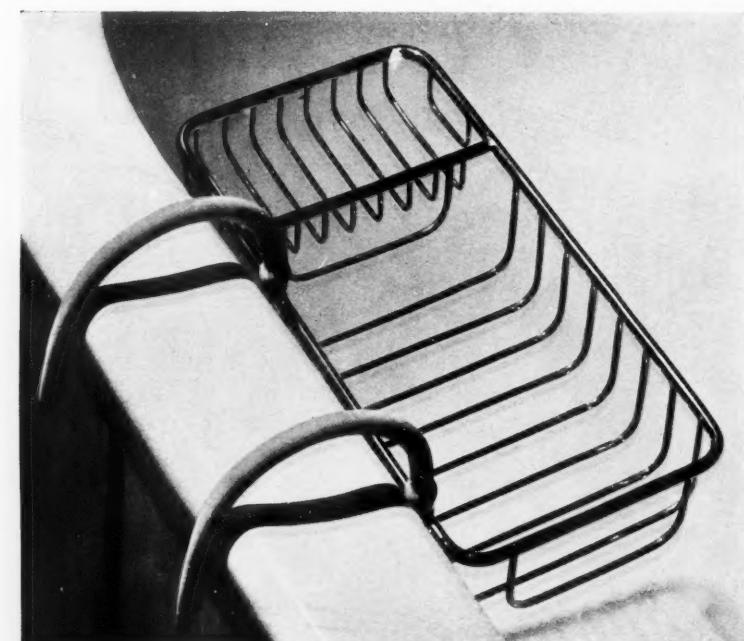
In these articles, by taking each object that has to be stored in turn, it is hoped to show what decorative effect the ingenuity of architects can extract from an efficient accommodation of it. The heading of the first article was Books; of the second Kitchen Storage; of the third Clothes; of the fourth Studio and Writing Materials; of the fifth China and Glass; of the sixth Nursery Storage; of the seventh Dressing Tables. This month it is Bathroom Storage: the storage problem in a room that has undergone as much change in the hands of the modern architect as any. The notes are by Frederick Gibberd.

8 BATHROOM STORAGE



2

The two illustrations on this page indicate the problem of which bathroom storage consists. 2, an exhibition bathroom (Connell, Ward and Lucas, architects), summarizes most of the bathroom's storage needs, at least those that are not (like the linen cupboard) a matter of providing space behind doors: rails, hooks and various kinds of containers. 3, shows that at least some of these storage problems are already solved with real decorative quality by a standard product: a chromium-plated sponge and soap rack. The floor and walls in 2 have a plastic finish which gives a warm, smooth surface. The curved partition round the shower is made on a framework of metal lathing and finished in the same plastic material. The piping to the towel-rail and shower is concealed within it.



3

In the average bathroom, apart from a towel-rail and perhaps a soap-holder, no storage equipment is provided, and in consequence any decorative qualities that the room might possess are nullified by a miscellaneous collection of hooks, rails and containers fixed by the owner to those walls that will take a wood screw. When the problem of bathroom storage is studied in advance it is generally found to be more difficult than that in any other room in the house. This is because, quite apart from the wide diversity of articles and their comparative smallness, most of them must be stored immediately at hand and not shut away in cupboards. The storage must be on the surface rather than within it.

The finishing materials of the modern bathroom, tiles, terrazzo, cork, glass, porcelain enamel and like materials, have smooth, flat, glossy surfaces, which bring into prominence any article set against them; it is obvious, then, that the towel-rails, hooks and containers must be of perfect design themselves, and must be fixed in such a manner that they create the least possible disturbance to continuity of surface. The chief

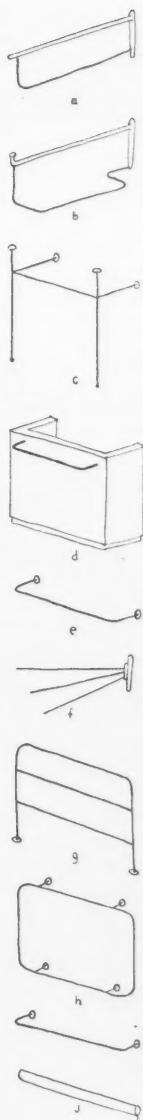
sanitary fittings, the bath and the lavatory basin, often have very satisfactory forms which, being of a continuous plastic nature, make a marked contrast with the flat planes of the wall and floor surfaces. This contrast is one of the most characteristic decorative features of the bathroom and care has to be taken to see that it is not broken down by the introduction of the small, comparatively fussy storage article.

Dealing first with storage in connection with the largest element, the bath, this consists in providing receptacles within easy reach for the soap and sponge. The recessed white earthenware tray is the most common method; this is obtainable with one or two compartments, to standard tile sizes, so that it can be fixed without creating disturbance to the pattern or texture of the tile joints. Although most of the types on the market are of the angular modernistic variety it is possible to obtain a holder with rounded surfaces in complete affinity with those of the bath. Fixed in the wall centrally over the bath a holder of this nature can assist rather than detract from the decorative scheme, as apart from its own quite interesting

shape it emphasises the flat plane of the wall surface by the shadow cast within it, as seen in 8.

In luxury bathrooms it is common practice to form a wide recess in the wall above the bath and here again a contrast is provided to the wall surface by the shadow it casts. In 4, an asymmetrical arrangement, this contrast is further accentuated by finishing the recess with scarlet tiles which form a vivid splash of colour in the surrounding white-tiled surface. A symmetrical arrangement is shown in 6. Here the bottom of the recess is level with the bath rim. Soap and sponge baskets are often provided in addition to a recess, and these, with their thin wiry nature and metallic finish, 3, look most decorative against the smooth, continuous planes of the bath.

The problem of storing soap does not arise with the washbasin, as a recess is provided as part of the basin itself, although with the expensive flat-top variety a receptacle is required such as that shown in 1 (page 27). The toothbrush and tumbler may be suspended in one of the special holders sold for that purpose, or may be stored out of sight in a cupboard along with the shaving tackle and other equipment used at the basin. There are a diversity of such cabinets on the market for hanging on or building into the wall adjacent to the basin. Most of them have mirrors attached to the cupboard door, and are of such a shape that they are almost bound to conflict with that of the basin. The cupboard must be designed as part of the basin or kept quite apart from it as a separate entity. An example of the former is shown in 9. Here the basin is fixed on the wall to project from its surface, an arrangement made possible by the basin being fixed at a distance from the wall, thereby obviating the danger of the user hitting his head on the bottom of the cupboard when stooping over the basin. As an alternative to a



4

4, a bathroom in a London house (M. B. Cooke, architect). The walls are faced with white tiles of eggshell glaze, the same tiles surround the bath and the floor is of blue tiles. The storage provision has been made the focal point of the decorative scheme as the recess for bottles above the bath is lined with bright scarlet tiles, the same colour being repeated in the tapes of the Venetian blind. 5, part of the standard bathroom in the Highpoint flats (Tecton, architects), with a storage recess above the basin. It has a sliding glass front. 6, the bathroom in a house at Mill Hill, also by Tecton. In this case an open shelf is provided along the whole length of the wall, behind the bath and basin.



5



6

projecting cupboard, a recess can be formed in the wall surface, as in 5 and 8 ; fitted with glass doors this looks well, but accommodation must be found elsewhere for medicine bottles, which look untidy and are only required from time to time.

As the small hand-towel must be hung near the washbasin, a rail is often made part of the bracket supporting the basin. The simplest type has a rail hung from the underside of the bracket (*a* in the diagrams on page 29). An improvement on this variety has the rail cranked so that the towel is clear of the side of the basin, *b*. When the wall is not sufficiently strong to take a cantilevered bracket the basin may be stood on a tubular metal stand, the horizontal bars of which form a towel-rail, *c*. Alternatively, it may be supported on a wood framing forming a cupboard upon which a rail may be mounted and fed from a loop to the hot tap, *d*.

In all the above examples the rails form a cohesive unit with the washbasin, to which they are subordinate. The single loop, *e*, and the swivel bracket, *f*, are usually mounted on a plain wall surface away from the basin, as in 2. The bath-towels, being large, should also be hung against a blank wall and well clear of splashes from the bath. Bathrails are usually run off the central heating system, the most common type being the chromium-plated tubular stand fed from pipes running in the floor thickness, *g*. The complete loop fixed on the wall as a bracket, *h*, generally looks better and has the advantage that it keeps the floor clear of obstruction. When electric heating is used, or for that matter with central heating, one of the simplest and most efficient methods of storing the bath-towel is to hang it on a cold rail mounted above the heating element, *j*; in this way the towel does not come into contact with the heat source, but is dried off evenly by the warm air.



7



8



9

7 is not strictly a bathroom but a cubicle in a women's hairdressing saloon (Wells Coates and Edric Neel, architects). However, the problem is the same as in a bathroom, with the storage needs a good deal greater. The partitions are in framed plywood and the furniture in hardwood painted shell pink. 8, the bathroom in a house near Kingston (E. Maxwell Fry, architect), with a small storage recess in the wall above the bath and a larger glass-fronted one behind the basin. 9, a larger cupboard over a basin, in this case framed and built out from the wall instead of recessed, in the same bathroom as that shown in 4.

The Romantic South

Baton Rouge was clothed in flowers like a bride—no, much more so: like a greenhouse. For we were in the absolute South now. . . . And at this point, also, begins the pilot's paradise: a wide river hence to New Orleans, abundance of water from shore to shore, and no bars, snags, sawyers, or wrecks in his road.

Sir Walter Scott is probably responsible for the Capitol building; for it is not conceivable that this little sham castle would ever have been built if he had not run the people mad, a couple of generations ago, with his mediæval romances. The South has not yet recovered from the debilitating influence of his books. Admiration of his fantastic heroes and their grotesque "chivalry" doings and romantic juvenilities still survives here, in an atmosphere in which is already perceptible the wholesome and practical nineteenth-century smell of cotton-factories and locomotives; and traces of its inflated language and other windy humbuggeries survive along with it. It is pathetic enough that a whitewashed castle, with turrets and things—materials all ingenuine within and without, pretending to be what they are not—should ever have been built in this otherwise honourable place; but it is much more pathetic to see this architectural falsehood undergoing restoration and perpetuation in our day, when it would have been so easy to let dynamite finish what a charitable fire began, and then devote this restoration-money to the building of something genuine.

Baton Rouge has no patent on imitation castles, however, and no monopoly of them. Here is a picture from the advertisement of the "Female Institute" of Colombia, Tennessee. The following remark is from the same advertisement:—

"The Institute building has long been famed as a model of striking and beautiful architecture. Visitors are charmed with its resemblance to the old castles of song and story, with its towers, turreted walls, and ivy-mantled porches."

Keeping school in a castle is a romantic thing; as romantic as keeping hotel in a castle.

By itself the imitation castle is doubtless harmless, and well enough; but as a symbol and breeder and sustainer of maudlin Middle-Age romanticism here in the midst of the plainest and sturdiest and infinitely greatest and worthiest of all the centuries the world has seen, it is necessarily a hurtful thing and a mistake.

Here is an extract from the prospectus of a Kentucky "Female College." Female College sounds well enough; but since the phrasing it in that unjustifiable way was done purely in the interest of brevity, it seems to me that she college would have been still better—because shorter, and means the same thing: that is, if either phrase means anything at all:—

"The president is southern by birth, by rearing, by education, and by sentiment; the teachers are all southern in sentiment, and with the exception of those born in Europe were born and raised in the south. Believing the southern to be the highest type of civilization this continent has seen, the young ladies are trained according to the southern ideas of delicacy, refinement, womanhood, religion, and propriety; hence we offer a first-class female college for the south and solicit southern patronage."

What, warden, ho! the man that can blow so complacent a blast as that, probably blows it from a castle.

MARK TWAIN

(*Life on the Mississippi*, 1882).

MARGINALIA

Town Planning Report

The Town Planning Institute has just published the report of its Committee on Compensation and Betterment which was set up in 1938 after the Ministry of Health's Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee had drawn attention, in its report on the preservation of the countryside, to the way essential schemes for preservation were hampered by the present cumbersome machinery for compensation and betterment.

The Institute's report is too elaborate and specialized a document to be examined in detail here. Town-planning legislation is a complicated

subject—too complicated, for one's chief reaction on reading the report is renewed irritation that the whole subject, which is simple in essence, should have become so obscure in practice that one cannot see the issues at stake clearly for the elaborate legal structure in which they are concealed. The result is that a report such as this is able to expend so much well-meant energy on the study of legislative detail while having, apparently, lost sight of the meaning of planning as a whole. There is a discouraging complacency in the Institute's statement that "the bulk of the land in England is already being planned, and the small balance in that country and the

greater balances in Scotland and Wales should forthwith be brought under control."

If this is literally true, then planning does not mean what it is supposed to mean. Something has gone wrong, you only have to look at England and see. The really fundamental questions are what should be having the Town Planning Institute's attention, not the detailed design of a machine which itself so obviously needs over-hauling.

But the report is not without value. Many of its recommendations, in spite of this fundamental shortcoming, are valid and useful within their own scope. A typical one is that concerned with the working of land for minerals.

The Institute's own summary of this section of the Report reads as follows:

The working of minerals presents grave problems in connection with planning. Surface working destroys and leaves derelict large areas of good land, and underground working causes subsidence which renders building unsafe and causes flooding and seriously interferes with sewage disposal, etc.

The gravity of the problem presented by the surface working of iron ore was recognized by the Government when they appointed a Departmental Committee, under the chairmanship of Lord Kennet, to report on the matter. Iron ore is, however, only one form of despoliation; large areas of land are also laid waste by the removal of gravel, sand, clay, etc.

In the present report, it is fully recognized that minerals are an important national asset and that no unnecessary obstacle should be put in the way of their working. It is also recognized that there are other assets and that, therefore, a reasonable balance has to be found. At present, mineral working is amply protected by the Town and Country Planning Act and it is not suggested that this protection should be reduced. On the other hand, it is strongly recommended that the owner should not be allowed to have the best of both worlds but should be required to choose between mineral value and building value. The amendment proposed would enable a scheme to secure that when surface minerals have been exploited, no building value shall attach to the land and that, consequently, the land will be available for open space uses or for agriculture or afforestation at a value which makes such uses practicable. Another effect of the amendment should be to prevent building upon unsuitable excavated surfaces or land liable to subsidence owing to the extraction of minerals.

Coventry Looks at the Future

Following are some quotations from a paper entitled "Problems of Building Reconstruction," read on December 4th before the Royal Society of Arts by Mr. D. E. Gibson, City Architect of Coventry.

"As a material ideal we should postulate the right of every man and woman to a healthy and beautiful environment. This cannot be acquired merely by local planning, but national planning is also required, so that the first step should be the formation of a full-time committee of highly-trained planners in possession of such knowledge as already exists, such for instance as the report of the Commission for Industrial Distribution of the Population, the relevant P.E.P. Report, and the report of the proposed Severn Barrage Scheme. This committee should have the widest powers possible in war-time, and no vested interest should be allowed to withhold from it information necessary for the preparation of a long-term national plan. To assist this central committee, every town should have in its architect's department a group of town planners, preparing a local survey from which a comprehensive plan could be constructed.

At present there is a tendency for populations to converge on a few great centres, leaving the countryside and its natural industries to decay. I believe that this movement is wrong, and I would like to see a reversal of this present tendency. It should be possible, with the grid and cheap electricity, to have a network of clean healthy towns, small enough for every man to be within calling distance of the country, and yet large enough to provide collective facilities for decent cultured living. The towns would aim at consuming as much as possible of the products of their local region. In this way the towns and

country, so long divorced, would be regenerated. The keynote of the planning committees to which I have referred should be decentralisation and regeneration.

"It will take some time to work out all the details of the major problems, and in the meantime there will be the immediate post-war problems to be considered. There will be a shortage of labour, because of the tremendous volume of the work proceeding, and an even greater shortage of skilled labour owing to the war-time diversion of building operatives into the factories and the services, with a consequent loss of craftsmanship. There will also be a shortage of certain materials, which it will be impossible to import rapidly enough.

"After the last war these conditions gave rise to the production of prefabricated steel and concrete houses, mostly of very poor design. They were unsatisfactory because of the lack of scientific research which had been carried out. They were cold and noisy, they had condensation in winter and they got too hot in summer. In recent years the Building Research Station has done an immense amount of technical and scientific research on building materials, and these defects should not arise again. The faults lay not with the materials involved, but with the manner in which they were used; there had been no opportunity of trying out these new methods before putting them into use.

"There are today too many houses, schools, libraries and offices which cause us discomfort and annoyance by their inadequacy for contemporary needs, but are too solid and too expensive to pull down.

"Building science is advancing so rapidly that we have no right to build for a thousand years. A university is a permanent thing, but the permanence should lie in the continuity of learning, not in the building, which satisfies the wants of yesterday but hampers those of today. A house should be regarded as permanent only for about thirty years and should then be replaced by an up-to-date one. This would incidentally help the inevitable movement of population which will be caused by the war and by our national post-war plan. All materials in a house should, if possible, be designed to live the same useful life, just as in a modern car; in contrast to the small house of today where the bricks *might* stand for a thousand years, and the softwood bay windows only twenty years without extensive repairs. But bay windows, doors, cupboards and most of the other components of the speculatively built house are mass produced already, although too often based on inefficient and badly-designed models. As we already have mass-produced houses, then let us at least mass produce these well.

"After the war Coventry alone will have several large factories which will no longer be required, but there will still be the plant, skilled labour and organisation. Why not switch these factories over to the production of houses using the light, efficient and beautiful materials like steel, duralumin and light alloys, which are stressed to such efficiency and economy in aircraft. Another material which should have extensive uses is pre-cast concrete.

"If, as I believe, the solutions to the post-war housing shortage lies along some of these lines, then it may be necessary to make some alterations to the building trade organisations. By this I mean that a new trade of say fitter or assembler will be required, and concreting should also be recognised as a proper trade.

"In order that the new forms of construction may be ready when the call comes it is necessary to set up now a committee of architects who are facing these problems, representatives from air-

craft works (both on the design and organisation sides) and members of the Building Research Station who have been experimenting for so long with new materials. This committee can decide the design and construction, accommodation to be provided in each house—say three-bed parlour type as a basis—and many other points which will enable building to commence almost immediately after the termination of hostilities.

"The wider aspects of building call for much alteration from the administrative and executive points of view. First, the all-important question of land: everyone who appreciates the eternal and immortal qualities of the earth in contrast to man's ephemeral existence, can see the immense amount of evil which can be caused by selfish speculation. For the good of the community private interests must be subordinated to public ones."

A Bishop on Interior Decoration—

"To find a thirteenth century church with pitch-pine seats the colour of orange peel and supplied with magenta hassocks is to be tortured beyond endurance."—Dr. Bernard Heywood, retiring Bishop of Ely, reported in the *Daily Express*.

—and a Chairman's Wife

"The entrance to the six-floored club* building in Charing Cross Road is dominated by a carved oak eagle with wing span of 4 ft. 9 in.

"Mrs. Bob Hutchinson, wife of the club's chairman and daughter of Richard le Gallienne, has directed decoration and furnishings. Cream walls, old oak furniture, green leather easy chairs, reproduction tapestries and chintzes and several open fires are part of her plan for homeliness."—*Evening Standard*.

CORRESPONDENCE

Miners' Welfare

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

SIR,

The December 1940 issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW contained a notice of the Annual Report of Miners' Welfare for 1939. The two following passages in the article do not correspond with the facts and will create an erroneous impression among your readers:—

"The Report under review is the last that will appear. Since its publication, as a result of the war, the Department is being closed down."

"This notice must serve as an obituary notice of a remarkable team of architects."

The facts are:—

The Miners' Welfare Commission hope to publish their Annual Report for 1940 as usual, though Government restrictions on paper will necessitate a reduction in the size of the volume.

More urgent calls on building materials and labour have rendered it necessary for the Commission to suspend temporarily its main building programme. Consequently a proportion of the staff, who were of military age, was available for service in the Armed Forces or to be transferred

* The Eagle Club, for Americans serving in Britain.—Editor, A.R.

to architectural work more closely associated with the war effort. A nucleus staff comprised largely of members of the original team, who from the inception of the work have been responsible for initiating and directing the architectural policy and practice of the Department, will be retained. During the war they will be fully engaged upon the completion of works already under construction, the repair of war damage, works necessary for the proper maintenance of existing welfare facilities and work in preparation for continuing the building programme on an enlarged scale when conditions will permit.

The Miners' Welfare Commission is proud of the achievements of its Architect's Department and the widespread recognition its work has received from competent authorities here and abroad. It is the intention of the Commission that their Architect's Department should not only play its full part but, on the foundation so well and truly laid, give a lead in the reconstruction period ahead.

Yours, etc.

C. G. KEMP

(Acting Chief Architect).

Ashtead, Surrey.

We apologise most sincerely for the misleading impression our review must have given. The statements Mr. Kemp quotes were of course made in good faith and were given as a matter for regret and we are delighted to learn that our fears were unfounded and that the Architects' Department is continuing its excellent work.—Editor, A.R.

A Tower for London

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

SIR,

I have just had an opportunity of seeing a copy of your November issue, and I was extremely interested in the article "A Tower for London," but surely the writer is mistaken in saying that the project did not get beyond the collection in book form of the 68 designs submitted.

In the 'nineties I lived in the north of England, and attended a school in Surrey. I used to pass through Wembley several times a year, and I have very distinct recollections of seeing the gradual progress of the actual building of the tower, until it reached the first stage. There it stopped, and after a few years was taken down again.

This tower was always eagerly looked out for as being the first definite sign that after a long railway journey we were approaching the metropolis.

Yours, etc.,

J. K. CLAYTON.

Manchester.

We are grateful for this additional piece of information on a subject about which, we believe, nothing had been seen in print before the article by Mr. J. M. Richards to which our correspondent refers. By way of giving chapter and verse for his statements our correspondent sends us the following extracts. These round off in a most satisfactory way a little-known piece of nineteenth century history. It only remains for someone to discover a photograph of the partly built tower taken during its short life of ten years.—Editor, A.R.



[From "Haydn's Dictionary of Dates," 25th edn.]

WATKIN TOWER

Wembley Park, near Harrow, N.W. of London. In 1889, the Metropolitan Tower Co. was formed, Sir Edward W. Watkin, Chairman, for the erection of a tower resembling the Eiffel Tower.

Premiums were offered for designs, and 500 guineas was awarded to Messrs. A. D. Stewart, J. M. Maclarens and W. Dunn, joint authors. The designs were exhibited at Drapers' Hall, 29th April, et seq. 1890. Part of the Wembley Park Estate was leased by a new company for 999 years from 21st October, 1892, at a rental of £2,000 a year. The structure, solely of steel, to be erected by Messrs. Heenan & Froude, of Manchester (December, 1892), under the direction of Sir Benjamin Baker.

Wembley Park opened 12th May, 1894. Erection of Tower stopped through lack of funds, August, 1894; the first platform opened 155 feet from the ground, 18th May, 1896, demolition commenced 11th September, 1906, completed 8th September, 1907.

[From "Encyclopædia Britannica," 11th edn.]

WEMBLEY

The district is residential, but lacks natural attractions except in the case of Wembley Park, a pleasant wooded recreation ground owned by a company.

Here a tower was begun on the lines of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and projected to exceed it in height, reaching 1,200 feet, but only a short stage was completed.

[From "Dictionary of National Biography," Second Supplement, 1901-1911.]

SIR EDWARD WILLIAM WATKIN (1819-1901) BY C. W. SUTTON

His passion for enterprise further led him to become Chairman in 1889 of a Company to erect at Wembley Park, Middlesex, a 'Watkin' Tower on the model of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Owing to lack of funds only a single stage was completed; this was opened to the public in 1896 and was demolished in 1907.



As is well known, Teak contains a natural oil, and the paradox is that it is this very oil which makes Teak withstand fire.

This oil burns very readily on exposure to air, so that when ignited, the surface oil flares up, causing the wood to char quickly; the resulting charcoal, being a very bad conductor of heat, prevents the fire from penetrating further into the wood.

A Teak door, or panelling to a room, will help to localise fire to that room, giving the fire brigade time to arrive and put it out. This is extremely important in country areas where fire-stations are some distance away. This fire-resistance of Teak is so well known that, in such inflammable places as the cutting rooms of film studios, Teak is the only wood used.

WAR-TIME SUPPLIES OF TEAK

Teak is officially recognised as an essential war-time import. Ample supplies are available and the price remains moderate.

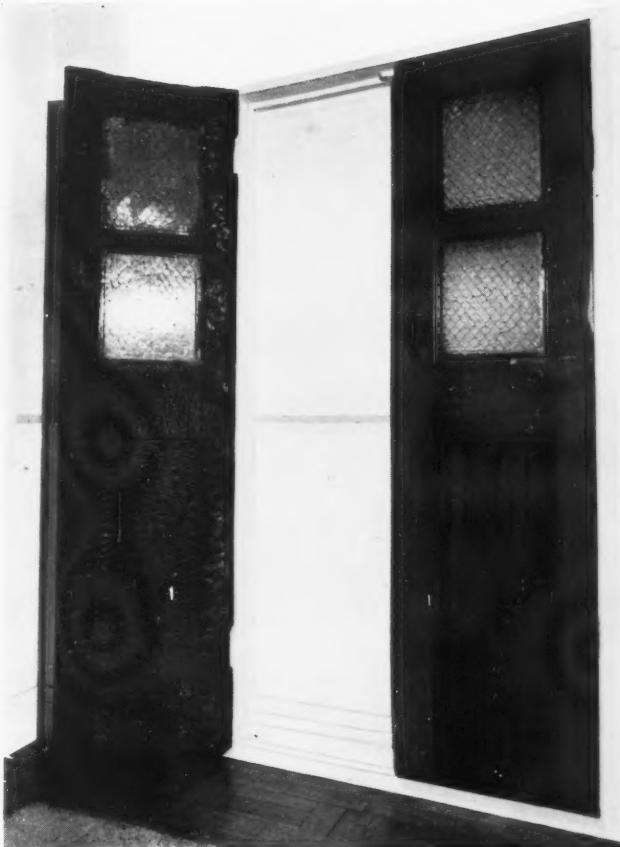
These doors are in the Museum of the London Fire Brigade. They illustrate very well how Teak resists fire. They stood in a corridor and confined a fierce fire to the side on which it broke out. On the one side they are badly charred but on the other side the varnish is not even spoilt.



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Teak—*Tectona grandis*

The only true Teak is *Tectona grandis*. (See the recently issued "British Standard Nomenclature of Hardwoods" on this point.) Beware of other so-called "teaks." These woods are not *TECTONA GRANDIS* and therefore are *not* Teak. They do not possess the properties of Teak.

BURMA TEAK
Stoneham & Kirk

The Buildings

Illustrated

Ecclesfield Town Senior School,
Yorkshire.

Architects : Sir John Burnet,
Tait and Lorne.

Chief Assistant : Frederick
MacManus

The general contractors were A. F. White Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following: Twisteel Reinforcement Ltd. (high tensile steel reinforcements), F. & E. Eastman Ltd. (floor and wall tiling), J. Cooke and Son (patent flat roofing), W. Beardmore and Co. Ltd. (acoustic treatment to assembly hall), Horsley Smith and Co. Ltd. (hardwood flooring), George Parnall and Co. Ltd. (wood doors), Venesta Ltd. (w.c. dividers and shower screens), W. and R. Leggott Ltd. (ironmongery and mat

rims), Light Steelwork Ltd. (bronze handrail), Aston Construction Co. Ltd. (constructional steelwork), Standard Metal Window Co. (metal windows, doors and screens), T. W. Sampson and Co. (electrical installation, electrical cable, electrical mains connection), Sheffield Gas Co. Ltd. (gas mains connection), Palorit Paints Ltd. (cement glaze dadodes), Shanks and Co. Ltd. (sanitary fittings), J. H. Shouksmith and Sons Ltd. (heating and hot water installation), B. Tordoff and Sons (unclimbable fencing, wrought iron gates, cat ladder), James Sieber (clothes hangers), French Asphalte Co. Ltd. (Asphalt flooring to showers), H. W. Turner Ltd. (cellar flaps, iron frame and door for boiler house), County Council Supplies Dept. (linoleum flooring), Troughton and Young Ltd. (electric light fittings to assembly hall proscenium), Daymonds Ltd. (exit signs), Eric Munday Ltd. (notice board to entrance gates),

Bratt Colbran Ltd. (electric fires and radiators), Smith and Wellstood Ltd. ("Mrs. Sam" range), J. Glover and Sons Ltd. (Gas drying cabinet), Jackson Electric Stove Co. Ltd. (electric cookers), Richmond Gas Stove Co. Ltd. (gas cooking equipment).

Watford Law Courts and
Police Buildings.

Architects : S. N. Cooke and
W. N. Twist.

The general contractors were Kent and Sussex (Contractors), Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following: Portland Stone Masonry Works (stone), Patent Victoria Stone Co. Ltd. (artificial stone), Henry Hope and Sons Ltd. (patent glazing, casements), H. Hems (cast lead), Zeta Wood Block Flooring Co. Ltd. (wood-block flooring), H. J. Cash and Co. Ltd. (central heating), H. O. Bennion (grates and mantels), St. Albans Gas Co. Ltd. (gas fixtures and gas fitting), H. Berry (electric wiring), Best and Lloyd Ltd. (electric light fixtures), Musgraves Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Robert Adams (Victor) Ltd. (door

[Continued on page xxii]

KEARSLEY'S ANTI-SPLINTER PROCESS FOR WINDOWS

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[Continued from page xx]

furniture, metalwork), Bigwood Bros. Ltd. (iron staircases), Hawkes and Snow Ltd. (sunblinds), F. De Jong and Co. Ltd. (decorative plaster), J. P. White and Sons Ltd. (joinery and furniture), J. Whitehead and Sons Ltd. (marble), Robertsons (Birmingham) Ltd. (tiling), Gyproc Products Ltd. (acoustic plaster).

Office Block, Albert Embankment, S.E.

Architects : Howard and Souster.

Consulting Engineers : G. A. Dodd and Partners.

The general contractors were R. A. Costain Ltd. Among the sub-contractors were the following : Redpath Brown & Co. Ltd. (steelwork), Caxton Floors Ltd. (hollow tile floors and beam casings), W. James & Co. Ltd. (metal windows), Greenham Ltd. (silver-grey facing bricks), Rosser and Russell Ltd. (heating, ventilation and hot water installation), Ellis (Kensington) Ltd. (plumbing and drainage), Girlings' Ferro-Concrete Co. Ltd. (cast stonework), Berkeley Electrical

Engineering Co. Ltd. (electrical installation), W. N. Froy and Sons Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Penrose Lifts Ltd. (lifts), D. Sebel & Co. Ltd. (wrought ironwork), Caston & Co. Ltd. (lift landing doors), Ramsdens (London) Ltd. (floor tiling and terrazzo work), Nash and Hull Ltd. (letter chute), Wm. Briggs and Son (roof covering), Whitehead and Sons Ltd. (marble work), Richard Costain Ltd. (granolithic work), P. H. Barker and Son Ltd. (softwood joinery), King's (B. D. J.) Ltd. (hardwood joinery and external and internal painting), R. Fox and Sons (cellulose bronzing), London Spray and Brush Painting Co. (spray painting and decorative work), Aygee Ltd. (glazing), Spun Concrete Ltd. (flagpole), Robert Adams Ltd. (ironmongery), J. W. Gray and Son Ltd. (lightning protection), Gilbert Scale and Son Ltd. (stone carving).

contractors were the following : The Tate (Foundation) Co. Ltd. (demolition), F. Bradford & Co. Ltd. (foundations), Field and Palmer Ltd. (asphalt), Caxton Floors Ltd. (reinforced concrete, fire-proof construction), Dumbrik Ltd. and The London Brick Co. Ltd. (bricks), W. C. Richardson & Co. (artificial stone), Redpath Brown & Co. Ltd. (structural steel), The Ruberoid Co. Ltd. (special roofing), F. McNeill & Co. Ltd. (Foamagg partitions), J. Clark & Son, Ltd. (glass), Horseley, Smith & Co. Ltd. (wood-block flooring), J. H. Jenner & Co. Ltd. (granolithic pavings), R. W. Steele & Co. Ltd. (central heating), Bratt Colbran Ltd. (grates, mantels), Johnson and Tanner, Ltd. (electric wiring and bells), Greenwood's and Airvac Ventilating Co. Ltd. (ventilation), E. A. Roome & Co. Ltd. (plumbing, joinery), Joseph Chater and Sons Ltd. (sanitary fittings), Adamite Co. Ltd. (stairtreads), Yannidis & Co. Ltd. (door furniture), Crittall Manufacturing Co. Ltd. (casements), James Couper & Co. Ltd. (casements and window furniture), Dennison Kett & Co. Ltd. and Haskins (rolling shutters), Chamberlain Morton Ltd. (black-out curtains), Cashmore Art Workers and Henry Hope and Sons Ltd. (metalwork), Educational Supply Association (joinery), Surrey Tile Co. Ltd. (tiling), Evans Lifts Ltd. (cranes).

Territorial Association

Headquarters.

Architects : Stanley Hall and Easton and Robertson.

The general contractors were E. A. Roome & Co. Ltd. Among the sub-

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